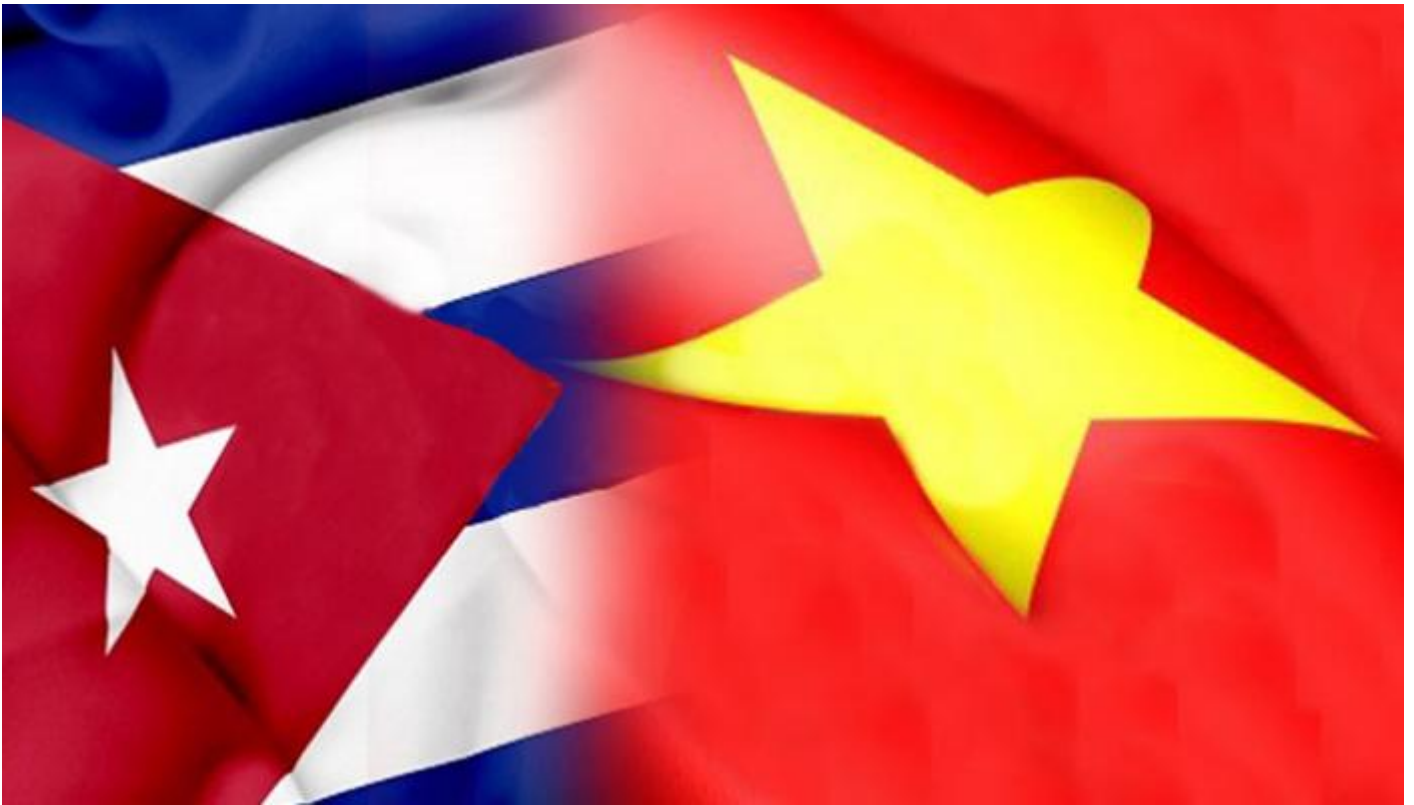


# *Cuba and Vietnam Celebrate 55th Anniversary of Friendship and Diplomatic Ties*

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Hanoi, December 9 (RHC)-- Vietnam and Cuba are celebrating the 55th anniversary of diplomatic relations, officially commemorated on December 2nd. An official reception was held Tuesday in Hanoi, the Vietnamese capital, attended by Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan, Vice Chairperson of the Vietnamese National Assembly.

Addressing those present, Kim Ngan, who is also a Communist Party politburo member, highlighted that for more than five decades, Vietnam and Cuba have shared and promoted common principles and ideals of freedom, socialism, independence, sovereignty and human solidarity.

The Vietnamese legislator praised Cuba's cooperation and support, especially during the country's war for independence and the subsequent national reunification and recalled the words spoken by the Cuban President Fidel Castro, who said -- and I quote: "For Vietnam, we are ready to shed even our own blood."

The Vietnamese official also took the opportunity to reiterate her country's unconditional support for Cuba against the U.S. blockade and urged to expand and strengthen bilateral cooperation ties in several fields.

Cuban Ambassador to Vietnam Herminio López recalled that Cuba was the first country to recognize the National Liberation front for South Vietnam in 1962.

Other activities to mark the 55th anniversary of Vietnam-Cuba relations included an official ceremony in Hanoi on November 30th, attended by authorities of the Communist Party of Vietnam, a photo exhibition with works by artists from the two countries on the history of bilateral ties and a ceremony held in Ho Chi Minh City, presided over by local authorities and Cuba's consul Bernabé García.

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