

# *President Raúl Castro Begins Official Visit to Antigua and Barbuda*

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St John, December 9 (RHC)-- Cuban President Raúl Castro began Saturday an official visit to Antigua and Barbuda aimed at strengthening Cuba's ties with member states of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

The visit begins one day after Raúl Castro participated in the 6th CARICOM-Cuba Summit, during which he renewed Cuba's support for and solidarity with the 14 CARICOM states.

Diplomatic sources said the first activity on Raúl's official agenda was a courtesy visit with the Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda, Sir Rodney Williams, which was followed by a meeting with Prime Minister Gaston Browne.

Prime Minister Browne and President Raúl Castro held official talks and then presided over the signing of a Joint Political Statement.

Also on Saturday, the Cuban leader attended a special session of the Assembly of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). He was accompanied by the prime ministers of Antigua and Barbuda,

Gaston Browne and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Ralph Gonsalves.

Other activities on Raúl's visit agenda include talks with former Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda Baldwin Spencer, who is currently serving as a Deputy to the country's House of Representatives for the United Progressive Party.

During his participation in the 6th CARICOM-Cuba Summit, Friday, President Raúl Castro held separate bilateral official talks with his counterparts from Suriname, Desiré Delano Bouterse and with the President of the Jamaican Senate, Thomas Tavares-Finson.

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