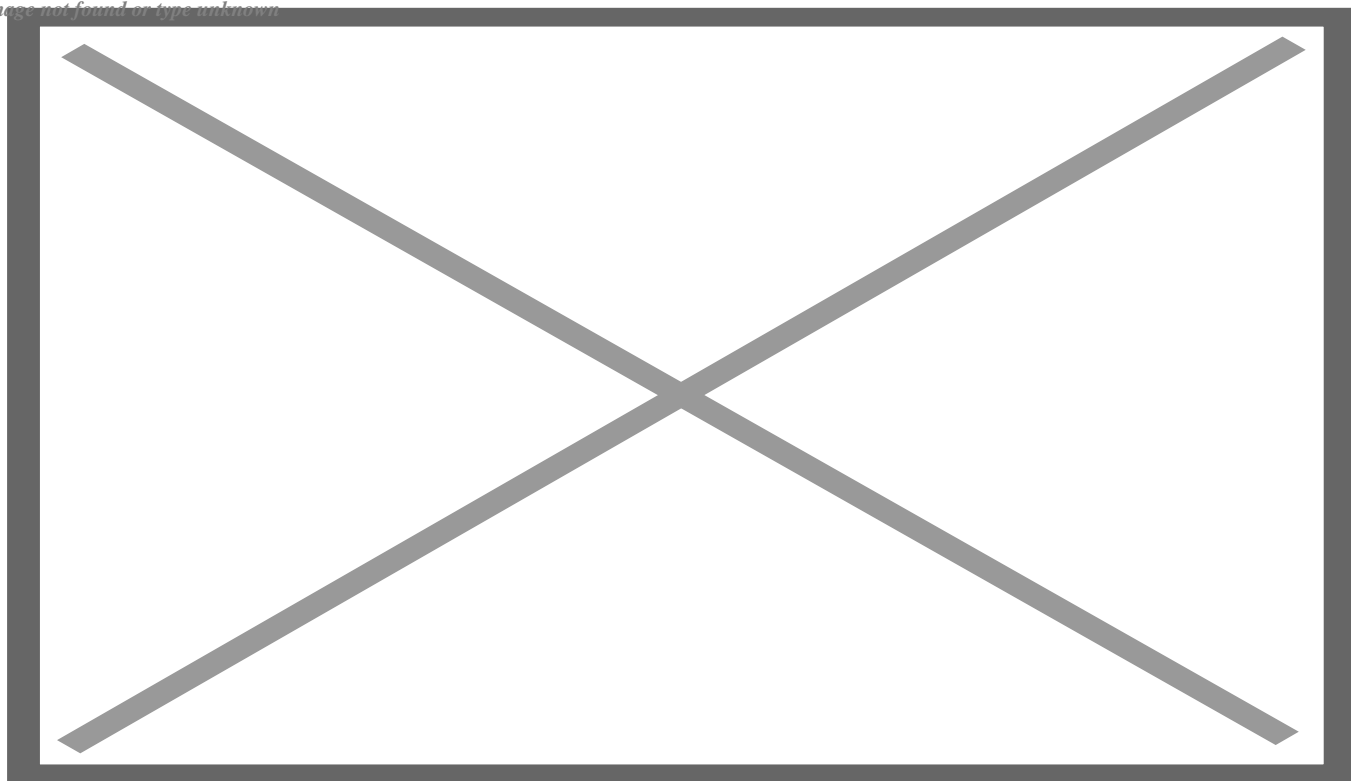


# *Cuba and Brazil move forward in the consolidation of their relations*

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By María Josefina Arce

With the arrival to the presidency in January 2023 of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, ties between Brazil and Cuba, which suffered a setback during the government of former President Jair Bolsonaro, allied to the hostile policy of the United States, were relaunched.

Now a new stage has been opened to advance in the consolidation of bilateral ties, which it is valid to emphasize were maintained with strength and without losing their essence of solidarity and friendship between the two peoples, despite the attacks of the ultra-right Bolsonaro.

Both countries have been working to resume the excellence of the ties existing under the governments of

the Workers' Party of Brazil. The visit to Cuba by Celso Amorim, head of President Lula da Silva's Special Advisor's Office, is part of this effort.

According to the South American giant's press media, Amorim traveled to Cuba in response to a request from the Brazilian president, a sign of his interest in strengthening bilateral relations.

A delegation of Brazilian legislators also visited Cuba last May with this objective in mind, who ratified their interest in contributing to the advancement of economic and commercial ties.

Both Brasilia and Havana have highlighted the existing potential for deepening cooperation in areas such as biotechnology, vaccine and food production, tourism and energy.

The two countries have a long and fruitful history of cooperation. Cuban health professionals were part of the "More Doctors" program, launched in 2013 by then head of state Dilma Rousseff to bring health to all corners of the South American country.

Specialists from the archipelago attended millions of Brazilians in almost four thousand municipalities. The Cubans brought hope and life to many citizens who received health care for the first time.

Cuban doctors were in that Latin American nation from 2013 to 2018, which withdrew from the program due to the attacks and conditions imposed by Bolsonaro, elected president and who joined the lies of the United States about Cuba's medical cooperation.

Opinion polls revealed that more than half of Brazilians believed that health would worsen after the departure of Cuban professionals from the country.

In addition, hundreds of young Brazilians from low-income families have studied at the Latin American School of Medicine, a humanitarian project created at the initiative of the historic leader of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro, to contribute to access to health care for all citizens.

Brazil also played a fundamental role in the construction of the Mariel Special Development Zone, in western Cuba, which is destined to become one of the driving forces of the Cuban economy.

Relations between Brazil and Cuba, which are currently going through a stage of full resumption in all areas, have undoubtedly a great strength in the friendship between Brazilians and Cubans.

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