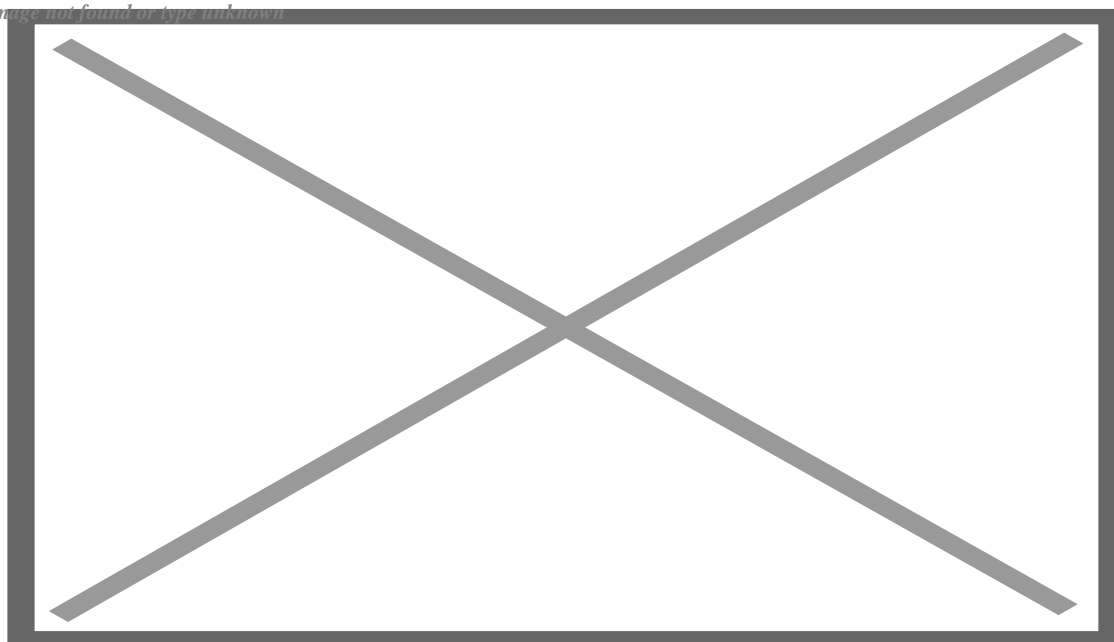


International Children's Day in Cuba and the new Code for Children, Adolescents and Youth

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By Maritza Gutiérrez

Instituted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1956, dedicated to brotherhood and understanding among children around the world, this day is a day for each country to promote activities that directly involve the youngest members of each household.

In light of this celebration, Cuba is entering this day engaged in a process of specialized consultation with the population to enhance its draft law, the Code for Children, Adolescents and Youth.

The draft law is the result of joint work between agencies of the Central State Administration, organizations, institutions, and experts on issues related to the care of children, adolescents, and youth.

The law complies with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which the Cuban State has been a signatory since January 26, 1990, and is binding and directly applicable in decision-making regarding the rights of children and adolescents, as provided for in Article 8 of the Constitution of the Republic of Cuba,

ratified on August 21, 1991.

Article 5 of the Draft Law expresses the principles that govern the rights of children, adolescents, and youth and establishes a fundamental framework to guarantee the protection, care, and active participation of these groups. Based on dignity, humanism, and justice, this article highlights the importance of supreme values ??that should guide policies and actions toward young people, ensuring that each of them receives equal treatment and protection without any form of discrimination.

The principle of equality and non-discrimination is crucial, as it establishes that all children and young people have the right to enjoy the same freedoms and opportunities, regardless of their personal or family characteristics. This implies a social and state responsibility to eliminate any barriers that impede their full development. The inclusion of multiple factors of discrimination, from skin color to sexual orientation, underscores the need for a holistic approach to defending their rights.

Furthermore, the principle of equity and social justice grants children and adolescents not only the right to equal opportunities but also recognizes the need for a differentiated approach for those in vulnerable situations. This approach addresses the specific characteristics and needs of each individual, thus promoting true equity in access to rights and resources.

Comprehensive protection of rights is another important pillar. Recognizing minors as full subjects of rights implies that their well-being must be considered in all areas of their lives. This requires the active collaboration of various institutions and social actors, ensuring that each child and adolescent receives the attention they deserve in all contexts in which they interact.

The social participation of youth is an equally relevant aspect. Allowing young people to be protagonists in identifying their own needs and participating in decision-making processes is essential for fostering a sense of belonging and social responsibility. This not only empowers young people but also enriches the democratic process by including their voices in the formulation of policies and programs.

Furthermore, the principle of intersectorality highlights the importance of a collaborative approach among different social actors. The coordination of efforts between state institutions and civil society organizations is essential for creating an environment that favors the comprehensive development of children and youth. Each of these principles, taken together, forms a solid foundation for building a more just and inclusive society, where respect for human dignity is the norm rather than the exception.

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