Cuba commemorates International Workers' Day in a different way

By: RHC
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International Workers' Day, a national holiday in Cuba, is being celebrated in a very different way this year. Huge parades and marches traditionally take place around the island every May 1st -- with the largest march through the Plaza de la Revolucion in Havana -- many years, with more than one million participants.

Solidarity activists come to Cuba from around the world at this time of the year to take part in the huge celebrations, marching shoulder-to-shoulder with their Cuban compañeras and compañeros. But there are no flights bringing in those activists to the island and we've all been advised to stay at home.

This is the year of COVID-19 and the day's celebration is very different. With quarantine measures in place and restrictions of social distancing, it was decided to cancel the actual marches -- and commemorate International Workers' Day in our homes and workplaces. Many Cubans hung flags from their windows, and hundreds of thousands -- perhaps even millions-- sang the National Anthem at 8 a.m. local time Friday morning, as suggested by Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel earlier this week.

A different way to celebrate, but a huge celebration nonetheless. May 1st -- International Workers' Day in the year 2020... the year of COVID-19. The Cuban people, protecting ourselves and our families from the coronavirus... united and determined to defend our sovereignty and the achievements of the Cuban Revolution.