
Raul Castro Highlights Friendship between Cuba and Vietnam

31/03/2018



President Raul Castro highlighted the excellent relations between the Cuba and Vietnam, after being awarded with the Golden Star Order, the maximum decoration granted by that Asian country, in Havana on Thursday.

Prensa Latina transmits the unabridged text of the speech given by Army General Raul Castro Ruz, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and President of the Councils of State and of Ministers, after receiving the maximum decoration granted by Vietnam.

Comrade Nguyen Phu Trong, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam;

Distinguished members of the Vietnamese Delegation;

Comrades:

The deep friendship between Cuba and Vietnam has survived the test of time.

We have built a solid relationship, forged in the difficult years of the struggle for Vietnam's liberation.

Our peoples, parties and governments have remained united and today they share mutual experiences in the construction of a socialist society that guarantees justice and wellbeing in both nations. And it will continue like this in the future, preserved by the new generations of Cubans and Vietnamese.

As early as 1889, our National Hero Jose Marti described the Vietnamese as men and women of huge hearts, whose industriousness, courage and abnegation have transcended the centuries.

Fate decreed that May 19 became a common national date. On that day in 1895, Jose Marti was killed in action, and five years earlier, the legendary and exceptional revolutionary Ho Chi Minh had been born in a humble village.

I remember the emotive meeting I held with him during my visit to his beloved country in October 1966; Ho Chi Minh's heartfelt words of thanks for the assistance from Cuba and Fidel; and about the solid foundations on which we forged the ties that unite us: '...our countries are geographically antipodes, but there is complete identification at the moral level', he stated.

At the time, we have already mobilized to support his struggle for national liberation and the country's reunification.

Comrade Fidel often noted the colossal exploit of Vietnamese resistance, which should be an example to us; and he summarized Cuba's internationalist commitment in one phrase: For Vietnam we are willing to give even our own blood!

In September this year, we will commemorate the 45th anniversary of Fidel's first trip to the liberated zone of Quang Tri. He was the only Head of State who did so. His image, waving the flag of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, expressed his absolute faith in the victory. He, like Ho Chi Minh, was convinced that after the enemy was defeated, a Homeland 'ten times more beautiful' would be built.

You were an example for those who anywhere in the world were fighting for their independence and against foreign intervention; you bequeathed the defensive doctrine of 'the war of the entire people', which guarantees victory over a numerically and technically superior enemy; you also represent perseverance and effort in the construction of socialism.

On behalf of our heroic people, and of the everlasting friendship that unites us; with the memory of Fidel and Ho Chi Minh more alive than ever, I receive the honorable Golden Star Order.

To the people, the Communist Party and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, our eternal gratitude.

Thank you very much.
