
Sailing free into the wind

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Last Monday, August 24th, had all the makings to be a different day in Cuba. All the island dawned in alert due to the threats of Tropical Storm Laura and Covid-19 pandemic, regardless of the category status on the Saffir-Simpson scale issued by Cuba's Civil Defense in each territory.

The Defense Councils, on alert for months fighting back the epidemiological situation, stepped up efforts so no one would be unprotected before this weather event.

Evacuations, tougher these days due to the pandemic, showed again two things: the ability and will of the Cuban Government to protect its citizens and the endless solidarity of this great, human, and brave people.

Isolation facilities remained operational and some evacuation shelters were activated. The people's health and the nation's economy were both safeguarded. Dressed in white and olive green, men and women came out to protect, first and foremost, the life of human beings.

Was it true that TS Laura did not hurt as much as expected? Yes. The Cuban president himself (Miguel) Díaz Canel corroborated it in a monitoring meeting where each province explained in details their own specifics. Thanks to mother nature that Cuba was not hit hard this time. But we should be also grateful to the accurate organization all Cubans have as well as our immediate and efficient response in the management of emergencies raised in hurricane seasons.

As soon as the Cuban Institute of Meteorology issues a warning on any new hurricane, an army of linemen, communication workers, farmers, army men and women, doctors, teachers, firefighters, parents, grandparents, and even kids, is ready to work hard aimed at safeguarding, fighting, and recovering, verbs we know by heart as actions are more efficient and accurate with the passing of the years.

We must continue now the recovery actions following our President's orders "to recover as soon as possible," especially in some areas of Eastern Cuba and the Isle of Youth. We need to evaluate damage fast and solve them

in record time. To do so, resources and human forces are ready in this sieged, but always fearless and brave nation.

This is the best way we have to face strong winds. The most dangerous of all, the pandemic which has made this 2020 look horrible. And we cannot give up. We shall continue to appeal to the consciousness of people, but we also need to strengthen the punishments against irresponsible individuals and deal with extreme accuracy with every detail that —despite endless efforts made by the health personnel, the discipline of so many people postponing hugs and celebrations for a greater good— has delayed the full eradication of Covid-19 in Cuba.

It was really a very rough Monday. But we fought back along with Fidel —such a natural, powerful anticyclone. His legacy led to a very good news to start the week: the vaccine named *Soberana* that the Cuban science is successfully conducting in clinical trials. I am fully proud. I am committed. There is hope...

Translated by Sergio A. Paneque Díaz / CubaSi Translation Staff
