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**Venceremos Brigade Celebrates 50th Birthday Anniversary in Cuba**

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The group brings together people from around the world with the purpose of supporting Cuba, its people and its Revolution

In the land of José Martí and Fidel Castro, the Venceremos Brigade celebrated Tuesday half a century of tireless work in favor of the friendship and solidarity between the peoples of the United States and Cuba and the cessation of the genocidal blockade imposed on the Caribbean island by consecutive Yankee administrations.

Jorge Cuevas Ramos, member of the Secretariat of the Communist Party of Cuba Central Committee, presided over the commemoration, held at the headquarters of the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP) in Havana, which brought together the members of the 50th contingent of the first brigade created, not only in the northern giant or in this hemisphere, but worldwide, with the purpose of supporting Cuba, its people and its Revolution.

This heterogeneous group, the most numerous over the last few years, has among its 150 members very young people and veterans such as Dennis Duncanwood, Tarnel Abbott and Leslie Kagan, who were part of that first and enthusiastic troop that accepted the invitation of Commander Fidel and came to the island in 1969 to make its contribution to the historic 10 million harvest.

We then believed that the Cuban Revolution was an extraordinary event, something transcendental, that needed and deserved our participation and contribution, and half a century

later that conviction continues to accompany us and bringing us to this land, year after year, Kagan said.

The “Venceremos” (the Brigade) has taught us all that solidarity is much more than a beautiful word and that it must be taken on as a commitment to life, both individually and collectively, and live it, and practice it, every day, she added.

Later on, two young leaders of this fiftieth contingent, Rachel Ibrahimi and Malcolm Sacks, joined their voices to reaffirm the founding purposes of the Brigade and to demand the unconditional and total cessation of the blockade imposed on Cuba for 60 years by the US government and intensified by its current administration.

We have challenged our government and its unfair ban on traveling to Cuba and here we are, as the Brigade has been, year after year, to defend and also to help build this Revolution, convinced that a better world is not only possible, but essential, Ibrahimi and Sacks said.

They thanked Cuba for the possibility of living incredible and unforgettable experiences, which they will take back to share them with friends, relatives, in their communities, in all spaces and in all possible ways, to ensure that the truth is known and continues to build bridges between the two peoples.

When closing ceremony, the Hero of the Republic of Cuba and ICAP President Fernando González LLort stressed that each action, however small it may seem, is valuable and will always have an impact. He said that for Cuba, the solidarity of the members of the brigade is and will be essential and thanked the countless expressions of friendship and unconditional in support of the campaign for his liberation that of the other four Cuban anti-terrorist fighters unjustly held in American prisons for more than a decade.

Hero of the Republic of Cuba and ICAP President, Fernando González LLort, delivered the closing speech of the ceremony. (Photo: Omara García Mederos / ACN)  
He also thanked them for their commitment and for defending the friendship between the two peoples, adding that they have demonstrated that Cuba is not and will never be alone. Finally, González LLort called to make Fidel's confidence in the solidarity work of the Brigade and its ability to tear down walls and overcome obstacles forever valid.

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