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Cuban Five at the Shade of a Carob Tree in Biran

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The visit of Cuban Five Ramon Labañino Salazar to [Biran](#) was a good excuse to talk to him at the shade of a carob tree and a royal palm tree, in the birthplace of the Castro Ruz family. Labañino Salazar was one of the five Cuban men that unfairly served for years in [US](#) prisons, despite having opposed terrorism.

[Gonzalez Sehwerert and Labañino Salazar: Thank You Holguin](#)

He was sentenced to a life term and 18 years, later his sentence was shifted to 30 years in prison; but he finally served unjustly for 16 years when released on the 17th of December, 2014, as part of a bilateral agreement between Cuba and the USA.

In Biran, at the birth place of Fidel and Raul Castro, Labañino Salazar breathed the pure air coming from the nearby Pinares de Mayari plateau, air of liberty and a people's hug.

In the event for the 120 anniversary of the restart of the war for the country's independence, and when given the decoration of Hero of the Republic of Cuba, Gerardo Hernandez Nordelo (another of the Cuban Five) said, "The Five's first thought went for Fidel (Castro), a man whose leadership and strategic vision played a key role in the battle for our release; whose example inspired us to go on fighting, resisting, and sacrificing ourselves... therefore, Comande in Chief: this decoration we receive with much joy, belongs to you too," he said.

- Today you are in Biran, what's Labañino Salazar's first thought?

"It's just as he said; you know every time we talk we do it on behalf of The Five, and it's that all our thoughts go side by side our Commanders in Chief, even before we met him in person; today we ratify our affection for him and our faithful towards the Cuban Revolution, our deepest conviction that here in Biran we feel Fidel's life, therefore, we'll keep on defending the ideal of Fidel, Raul, the ideas of this huge revolution we've had till today.

"Here in Biran, at the shade of this carob tree, we ratified our conviction of going on and meeting all the tasks that the homeland and mankind demand from us, and we're sure we'll be true followers of Fidel and Raul in every aspect in life that we've got to represent."

In the meeting with The Five told you he had time to ask you to dedicate part of your huge prestige in something useful for our people. What is it?

"It's, I'd say, a historic assignment; he asked us to become scientists, that's the main idea of his message to us. I believe he meant that in any position we take, in the economy, politics, diplomacy; we should go for excellence in our job, of course, always focused on the people's wellbeing.

"Today, our main task is the country's economy, the new relations with the US empire which wouldn't stop trying to seize Cuba, but on the light of the new relations opening we should be wide opened eyes; that's the way to go, and most of all pay tributes to that giant that gave us the chance of meeting with him, and tell him we're ready to go on, no matter the sacrifice, and to put all our witness and capacity to accomplish duties for the homeland."

- How do you picture the reestablishment of US-Cuba diplomatic relations, and Obama's wish of visiting Cuba?

"In my opinion they're reaching a higher level; the good thing is they're not attached to former rhetoric as in years back. A few days ago I said this is not rhetoric so far, it's language. You can't deny Obama speaks quite pretty, but it's true they're making concrete steps; taking Cuba away from the list of countries sponsors of terrorism is a very important step for us, the fact that Cuba's finally Section de Interests has access to a bank, which might seem to be a simple procedure but it's not, it's very complex indeed; and as he (Obama) has said several times, as in the Summit of the Americas, that he would like to visit Cuba are facts that tell us this is something serious, and that we should be prepared for that moment.

"For me the relations with the US are always welcomed, but if based on respect to our independence, our sovereignty, our honor and decorum as free men; under such scope we sit and talk with anybody, but no preconceived conditions; anyhow, we should be well prepared for that historic moment, which gets closer and I believe will be very profitable for all."

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