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**Cuban President Raul Castro Sends Message of Congratulations to Committees for the Defense of the Revolution**

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In his message from New York City, where the Cuban president is meeting a tight agenda at the United Nations, Raul acknowledged the role and work carried out by the organization, founded 55 years ago by Cuban Revolution leader Fidel Castro.

The CDRs, as the organization is known by its acronym, groups over 8 million 500,000 members, and the number of block organizations amount to more than 136,000 throughout the island.

The community organization, which groups neighbors living on each block, has carried out important tasks over the years, such as the collection of blood donations, support of vaccination campaigns, the organization of political and social activities, support of actions aimed at guaranteeing local order and security of the communities against crime, as well as volunteer and community work projects.

Cubans across the island are marking the 55th anniversary of their grassroots organization with cultural activities as it been a tradition to gather and celebrate in the eve of each anniversary.  
Edited by Ivan Martínez