

# Cuba National Day Special

## Year marked by health cooperation efforts

**MIGUEL ANGEL RAMIREZ RAMOS**  
AMBASSADOR OF CUBA



On Jan. 1, the Republic of Cuba, on its National Day, celebrates the 62nd anniversary of the revolution, which signifies the completion of more than a century of struggles of the Cuban people

for their true and definitive independence. Since then, the firm determination to build a nation "with everyone and for the good of all" has prevailed.

On such a significant date, I am honored to convey on behalf of the Cuban people and government, our best wishes for peace and prosperity in the Reiwa Era to Their Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako and other members of the imperial family, as well as to the government and people of Japan.

Last year, despite the coronavirus pandemic, relations between Cuba and Japan continued to strengthen. It is particularly relevant that one of the major milestones in our bilateral ties was the signing of a memorandum on health cooperation that will allow us to collaborate in the public health and medical assistance system, share our experience in the treatment of the elderly and combat the pandemic.

Under the leadership of the government, and with the support of the people, Cuba has been able to control and is defeating the coronavirus. This is the result of the strong will of a socialist state that has human beings at the center of its policies, with a free and universal health care system, as well as the coordinated efforts of experts and institutions from the science, biotechnology and pharmaceutical fields.

Otherwise, it would not have been possible for Cuba, a small underdeveloped nation, to currently have four vaccine candidates for COVID-19 in different clinical trial phases. Only industrialized countries

or large pharmaceutical companies have achieved something similar.

Despite economic hardship, Cuba has also contributed to other nations that have requested its help to face the pandemic. Fifty-four brigades of the Henry Reeve Medical Contingent Specialized in Disaster Situations and Serious Epidemics have been dispatched to 39 countries and territories around the world. This is in addition to the 28,000 health collaborators who were already present in 59 countries who joined national and local efforts to combat this disease.

The work of these medical brigades has garnered the admiration and recognition of many people around the world. Some of whom are promoting the nomination of the Henry Reeve Medical Contingent for the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize.

This cooperation is part of the solidarity tradition of the Cuban Revolution that, since 1963, has sent more than 400,000 health collaborators to 164 nations in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, the



Cuba is a real-life museum of American classic cars. EMBASSY OF CUBA

Middle East and Asia.

I would like to reiterate, dear friends, our gratitude for the multiple expressions of solidarity with Cuba from organizations, parliamentarians, political parties and Japanese society in general. We especially appreciate Japan's support to Cuba's demand for the immediate end of the United States' economic, commercial and financial blockade, the most prolonged,



The Capitolio Nacional is Havana's most majestic building and the seat of the National Assembly. It is also home to an 11-meter tall bronze statue, a mythic guardian of work and virtue.

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unjust and severe sanction system ever applied against any country, and one that has been condemned several times at the United Nations General Assembly.

I take this opportunity to wish success to the Japanese government and people in the celebration of the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, in which Cuba will actively participate and that will be a symbol of victory against the pandemic.

We extend our warmest invitation to all to visit Cuba, confident that you will enjoy its natural beauty, cultural values and historical heritage, where hospitable and cheerful people await you.

*This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.*

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on the National Day of  
the Republic of Cuba

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Cuba's doctors and nurses arrive in Turin in April to help Italy with its efforts to overcome the coronavirus pandemic.

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