

# Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev meets with President of the Cuban Council of State and the Council of Ministers Miguel Diaz-Canel Bermudez

The meeting was held as part of the official visit of the President of the Cuban Council of State and the Council of Ministers to the Russian Federation.

**Excerpt from the transcript:**



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**Dmitry Medvedev:** Distinguished President of the Cuban Council of State and the Council of Ministers Diaz-Canel,

Ladies and gentlemen, colleagues,

Let me extend my heartfelt greetings to you. We appreciate it that this visit to Russia is your first visit outside the Latin American region.

Cuba remains our ally and our strategic partner. We are bound by years of very warm relations. Regardless of the changes we passed through our relations have always been at a very high level. I have warm memories of my visit to Cuba in 2013 and the decisions that were made at the time. We are glad to develop our cooperation further, including with you as the President of the Cuban Council of State and the Council of Ministers. I would also like to ask you to pass on my regards and sincere good wishes to Army General Raul Castro, with whom I have enjoyed years of warm and friendly relations.

Yesterday you held talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin, discussed

issues of international cooperation, the current situation in the world and economic ties between our two countries. You and I have just discussed some key matters as well. I believe that this should give a boost to our relations. Despite being good friends and partners, we still have much to accomplish in the economic sphere. We have a number of major projects that have not been implemented, and our trade and economic cooperation has an enormous potential. I hope that this major official visit to our country will give the needed impetus to our relations in these areas.

Once again, let me extend heartfelt greetings to you.

**Miguel Diaz-Canel Bermudez** (*via interpreter*): Mr Prime Minister, thank you for your kind words. Our relations are based on historical ties, so it is no wonder that the first country outside Latin America I visited is the Russian Federation.

We would like to confirm with this visit that the new administration maintains the continuity of the legacy of Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz and Army General Raul Castro. We give the greatest priority to our relations with the Russian Federation. For us, these are strategic relations between allies. It is a certainty that our ties have remained unchanged and are part of the legacy. The Army General passed on his brotherly regards to you, and he and I are in agreement in our wish to invite you to visit Cuba when your schedule will permit. In addition, the goal of this visit is to review the progress made in our joint projects.

There are some highly symbolic things. It has been four years since the Russian President's visit to Cuba. That visit became a milestone and marked a new stage in our bilateral relations. It is apparent that the dynamics we see and feel today are a result of that visit in many respects.

We would like to thank you and your Government for help with the relief efforts in the wake of the last two hurricanes. The Russian Federation rendered aid and support following the hurricanes Matthew and Irma. Incidentally, just as we arrived in Russia, we learnt of Cuba's new victory in the UN General Assembly: the overwhelming majority of countries voted on the side of the Cuban revolution.

We can see the high level of our political ties and political dialogue, and we aspire for our economic relations, which are developing dynamically as well, to reach the same level as our political ties.

We have reviewed a group of projects that are currently being implemented, and we held a meeting with representatives of business and banking communities. All projects where the Russian Federation is involved are focused on strategic areas of our economic development: industry, transport, energy, biotechnology and pharmaceuticals, and tourism. We would like to make progress in telecommunications and cyber security, as well as infrastructure in general. This proves that cooperation with the Russian Federation helps us develop our economy. I believe this to be true and we should highlight this.

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