

[The living, brilliant nature of Fidel's concept of Revolution](#)



The **concept of Revolution** expressed by Fidel before the crowds gathered in the Plaza de la Revolución on May 1, 2000, encapsulates one of the most important legacies his leadership provides for **socialist theory and practice**, in terms of both the richness of its content and its historic significance.

Fidel summarized in an admirable synthesis his experience as the protagonist of a process of radical transformations, which led him to organize a political vanguard to overthrow the dictatorship and seize power; to lead a guerrilla war that gave rise to an army and popular movement; and direct the necessary changes so that the economic, social, political, and cultural rights of the excluded majorities, beginning with the workers and the campesinos, would for the first time be a reality in this homeland.

It must not be forgotten that all this was achieved in the midst of enormous tensions: imperialist aggression, the United States economic blockade of Cuba, the diplomatic encirclement of most of the countries of the region, and the legacy of underdevelopment.

As the twentieth century came to a close, many of the advances were seriously threatened by the disappearance of the Soviet Union and the socialist camp in Eastern Europe, and the escalation of imperialist hostility, evident in laws passed by Congress and a new wave of terrorist attacks on Cuban soil.

In this context, a further two aspects should be considered: on the one hand, the dictatorships sponsored by Washington in Latin America had given way to the implementation of neoliberal orthodoxy; on the other, the surfacing in the region of emancipatory processes, emerging within the framework of the rules of the game of representative democracy and driven by new social movements, was at this stage still very incipient.

I think Fidel felt the need to dialectically summarize what the scope and perspective of revolutionary action should be. As a Marxist-Leninist who did not adhere to paralyzing dogmas or sterile schemas, and

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a deeply-rooted and solidly committed follower of Martí, the leader of the Cuban Revolution had consolidated a holistic view of reality and, with his personal example at the forefront, had managed to make advances even in the most difficult circumstances.

But I also believe that it was not a question of looking back, but of anticipating the conditions in which the Revolution, its political vanguard and Cuban society as a whole, would need to develop during the times to come; with the generational change of leadership and the arrival of new national leaders on the horizon.

Hence the systemic and comprehensive character of the concept devised and conveyed by Fidel.

Obviously each of its principles has intrinsic value, but their dimension would be reduced if fragmented and not understood as an inseparable whole.

Many tend to emphasize two aspects of Fidel's definition: the sense of the historic moment and of changing everything that must be changed. The first requires taking into account the dialectic between tactics and strategy, between the temporary and the permanent, the apparent and the real and, of course, closing the doors to superficiality and improvisation. It requires political responsibility in any of the roles that we play within the social fabric.

This is essential on route to the decisive changes to perfect the Cuban socialist model. The First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba, Army General Raúl Castro, has insisted on several occasions that all transformations must proceed without haste, but without pause, to avoid regrettable errors stemming from hastiness or immaturity. Thus it is not a case of change for change's sake, but of knowing how to at the right moment. This is also a call to confront inertia, stagnation, and paralysis in the analysis of reality.

Another of the guidelines of Fidel's concept points to the consolidation of unity and social cohesion. Not to lose sight of the possible effects of social re-stratification conditioned by economic situations. But above all not to allow the introduction of models and ways of being that are alien to the nature of the Cuban process.

However, the central idea that runs through the Comandante en Jefe's definition is that of ethics.

Transparency, honesty, fidelity, loyalty, and commitment are revealed as keys to the fulfillment of one's duty, beyond temporary contexts and tribulations.

In this sense, he invites us to trace a line of continuity with the moral stature of José Martí and Ernesto Che Guevara, who knew how to defend and present truths, steadfastly committed to their convictions and principles, and practiced what they preached. Fidel himself is an example of revolutionary ethics and confidence in the triumph of ideas.

A few hours after the landing of the Granma yacht at Las Coloradas, the expeditionaries were surrounded, dispersed, and a number of them killed. Fidel was left practically alone in the scrubland that covered Alegría de Pio. In that context, a compañero heard him talk about future plans, what should be done when they won the war, and he thought for a moment that Fidel was delirious. Soon he and many others would know that, for Fidel, victory is the only possible aspiration of legitimate fighters.

Another unforgettable image of Fidel is from the closing ceremony of the Fourth Party Congress in Santiago de Cuba. Speaking in the Plaza de la Revolución Antonio Maceo, it began to rain.

Fidel, unshakable, did not stop giving his speech to the people. In his clear style and holding all the cards, he outlined the serious difficulties that were coming, but also the decision not to yield one iota of as regards principles or fighting spirit.

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Fidel is the living and brilliant form of the concept of Revolution.

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