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Belarus, Cuba eager to determine new vectors of economic interaction

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Belarus and Cuba intend to determine new vectors of economic interaction, BelTA learned from Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Cuba to Belarus Juan Valdes Figueroa on the eve of the visit of the Cuban president to Belarus.

Cuba President Miguel Mario Diaz-Canel Bermudez is expected to come to Belarus on an official visit on 22-24 October for the first time ever. According to the diplomat, the visit will allow reviewing the state of bilateral cooperation and determining new vectors of interaction, including economic one.

The ambassador remarked that good relations in various spheres have evolved between Cuba and Belarus since the Soviet Union times. "The visit of Fidel Castro to Minsk in July 1972 was a historic event for both countries. It was an important event, which became part of history of Belarusian-Cuban cooperation," Juan Valdes Figueroa reminded.

In his words, many Belarusians have made their contribution to the economic development of Cuba. Thousands of Cubans have graduated from Belarusian universities. "These pages of history now represent the foundation of today's friendship between Cuba and sovereign Belarus," the ambassador stressed.

The ambassador pointed out the establishment of interparliamentary contacts and the work of friendship groups in the parliaments. "There is commonality of views on international affairs. Both countries are members of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Cuba actively supports Belarus' efforts to join the World Trade Organization," the Cuban ambassador said. As for economic cooperation between the two countries, Cuba is still interested in the products it has been importing from Belarus for over 50 years: tractors, trucks, buses, motorcycles, agricultural machines and tools, spare parts and components, fertilizers, dairy and meat products, household appliances.

New high-tech products will be added to the list since Belarus now has a considerable potential in the area of communications, informatics, and biochemistry.

In turn, Cuba is interested in exporting the products Belarus has welcomed for decades, in particular, unrefined sugar, citrus fruits, coffee, rum, cigars, and agricultural products. In the last decade Cuba started exporting medications and biotechnology products. The ambassador added that the two countries had signed an agreement on the exchange of goods.

"Cuba is intent on bolstering cooperation with Belarusian government agencies and ministries, universities, the academy of sciences, with the chamber of commerce and industry.

In the last few years delegations were exchanged between the ministries of foreign affairs, agriculture, delegations between scientific and technological bodies, between the prosecution services," the diplomat stated. "We hope these exchanges will be productive."

The Cuban side is also intent on advancing contacts with Belarus in the area of education and culture.

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