

## LETTER

### "EVER ONWARD TO VICTORY"

Dear compatriots and dear friends from all over the world:

I have worked intensively all this time to ensure the objectives set for our country in the Proclamation of July 31st.

Currently, we are facing an adversary who has dragged the United States to such a disaster that the American people are almost sure to prevent him from completing his presidential term.

Intellectuals and prestigious personalities from the world:

As I reflected on this address, I found myself in a dilemma, since I could not find a small meeting room to accommodate you all. It was only in the Karl Marx Theater that all guests could be seated but, according to the doctors, I was not yet ready for such a challenging engagement. Then, I chose this way to address you all.

You are well aware of my identification with Martí's ideas about honor and glory, when he said that all the glory of the world fits in a kernel of corn.

Your generosity to me is really overwhelming. There are many people whose names I would like to mention here but I choose to avoid the recitation and decide on bringing up only one name, that of Oswaldo Guayasamin, since he embodied many of your greatest virtues.

He painted four portraits of me; the first in 1961. That one is lost. I looked it up everywhere possible but it could not be found. It was particularly painful as it became apparent to me what an exceptional person Guayasamin was. The second one, which he painted in 1981, is preserved at Guayasamin's House in Old Havana. The third one, painted in 1986, is kept at the "Antonio Nunez Jimenez Foundation of Man and Nature". When we met, we were very far from even imagining that his fourth portrait would be his birthday present to me on August 1996.

His words were inspirational when he said: "In Quito or any other corner of the Earth leave the lights on, as I will be coming back late."

At the inaugural ceremony of the Man's Chapel, I said about Oswaldo Guayasamin: "He was the noblest, most honorable and humane person I ever met. He created his work at light-speed and his human dimension defied all limits."

The work of creators will never be lost while this planet exists and human beings can breathe.

Today, thanks to technology, the works and knowledge created by man in thousands of years are within everybody's reach, even if the impact of radiation from billions of computers and cell phones is still unknown.

A few days ago, the prominent organization World Wildlife Foundation, based in Switzerland and considered the most important NGO in the world to monitor global environment, acknowledged that the set of measures implemented by Cuba to protect the environment made it the only country on Earth to meet the minimum requirements for sustainable development. This was for our country an encouraging honor, albeit one of limited world impact due to the low significance of its economy. Therefore, last November 23, I sent a message to President Hugo Chavez that read:

"Dear Hugo:

“The adoption of a Comprehensive Energy-Saving Program will make you the most prestigious world advocate for the environment.

“It is most significant that Venezuela is the country with the largest oil reserves, so this will turn you into an example and act as a magnet for all the other energy consumers to do the same, thus saving incalculable sums in investments.

“Just like Cuba, a nickel producing country, can mobilize resources amounting to billions of dollars for its development, Venezuela, a hydrocarbons exporter, could mobilize trillions.

“If the industrialized and wealthy countries succeeded in operating the miracle of reproducing solar fusion on the planet, within various tens of years, devastating before then the environment with their hydrocarbon emissions, how could the poor peoples that make up the immense majority of mankind live in this world?  
.....”

Finally, dearest friends who have honored us immensely with this visit to our country, it is with great sorrow that I bade you farewell for not being able to personally thank you and embrace everyone of you.

It is our duty to save our specie.

Fidel Castro Ruz  
November 28, 2006

*[This is the message from Castro to participants in the celebration of his 80th birthday]*