



Raul Castro Vows To Defend Fidel's Legacy In Final Tribute (Video)



Cuban President Raul Castro speaks at a tribute to his brother and late former Cuban leader Fidel Castro in Santiago de Cuba, Cuba, December 3, 2016.

REUTERS/Carlos Barria

President Raul Castro led tens of thousands of Cubans on Saturday in a pledge to defend the socialist legacy of his brother Fidel Castro, who died last week aged 90 and will be interred in the city where they launched the Cuban Revolution.

But Fidel Castro's image will not be immortalized with statues nor will public places be named after him, Raul Castro said, in keeping with his older brother's wishes.

"This is the unconquered Fidel who calls us with his example," the president, dressed in his four-star general's uniform, told a crowd that had burst into chants of "I am Fidel."

"Yes, we will overcome any obstacle, turmoil or threat in the building of socialism in Cuba," the 85-year-old Castro said in a speech before Santiago's packed central plaza.



Residents wave as the caravan carrying the ashes of Cuba's late President Fidel Castro arrives in Santiago de Cuba, Cuba, December 3, 2016. REUTERS/Carlos Garcia Rawlins

His ashes will be entombed near the remains of Cuba's independence hero Jose Marti in a simple ceremony beginning on Sunday at 7 a.m. (1200 GMT), concluding nine days of national mourning.

Raul Castro was joined on the stage by leftist foreign dignitaries and the Cuban political leadership to bid farewell to the man known to most Cubans as "El Comandante" – the commander – or simply "Fidel."

"The loss of El Comandante does not mean we will go stagnant," said Ansel Hechavarria, 61, a mechanic hoisting a large Cuban flag just before the 90-minute ceremony began. "We are going to continue his legacy."

After two days of events in Havana, Castro's funeral cortege departed on a three-day, 600-mile (1,000-km) journey east, retracing the route that the triumphant, bearded rebels took upon overthrowing the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista in 1959. [READ MORE](#)

The late Fidel Castro's funeral cortege arrived in Santiago de Cuba on Saturday, ahead of a ceremony to mark his life on Sunday. Nathan Frandino reports.