



The founding of the National Hostosian Independence Movement (MINH) “Movimiento Independentista Nacional Hostosiano) on May 16, 2004 signified a rare and unusual event and highly uncommon. For the first time in decades of struggle, two pro-independence organizations united, and joined as one. The historical tendency had been the contrary: the division of forces.

Ten years have passed. Now we can affirm that the joining of the National Hostosian Congress “Congreso Nacional Hostosiano” and the New Independence Movement of Puerto Rico “Nuevo Movimiento Independentista de Puerto Rico” was a step in the advancement of the political objectives that united them. The new organization emerged with force, enthusiasm and a renovated militancy that traced new objectives to advance the decolonization and independence of Puerto Rico.

We have made some good and some bad judgments. In this short space I would like to point out, ever so briefly, the most important ones. One of our first achievements was the acquisition of the building that houses our national organization in San Juan. Besides being our National Committee, it is the meeting place with other patriotic and progressive organizations, the meeting place of the diverse committees and groups struggling for the rights of the LGTB community, environmentalist, artist, civil rights, also the place of multiple activities and political education seminars.

The ground floor of our building houses three important projects: the Dr. Ramon Emeterio Betances health and well-being initiative, the Hostosiano Bazaar and a small print shop that will be opening soon. The first, directed by our companion and nurse, Eugenia Perez Montijo, has allow us to bring to the streets the beginnings of our proposed Promoter of Community Health, a pilot project that initially connected us to the Puerto Nuevo community but has already extended to other communities in San Juan like Santa Rita, San Jose, the Blondet community in Rio Piedras and Los Filtros in Guaynabo. The Hostosiano Bazaar, besides being a form of income

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Lunes, 02 de Junio de 2014 03:28 -

for the MINH, has allowed us to stretch out bonds with the Puerto Nuevo community as we offer articles for the home, clothes and books at very accessible prices. The print shop, soon to be functioning, will facilitate for us the publication of documents and bulletins, besides being a potential source of income for the organization.

The committee in Mayaguez, one of the most active of the MINH, also has its home offices where they have a Hostosiano Bazaar; they also have tutoring for students and community health clinics. The Hostosiano Fridays and the Hostosiano Movies celebrate each month in Mayaguez's Public Plaza, are permanent projects of our companions there. Like in Mayaguez, Hostosiano Fridays are also organized in San Juan, Arecibo, Caguas and Carolina-Trujillo Alto.

Spreading the news about our activities, protest, proposals and the visions about our the struggle and the Country relies on an efficient cybernetic web of social communication through our electronic mailing list, our redbetances.com, minhpuertorico.org and otropuertoricoesposible.org, besides our bi-monthly newspaper *El Hostosiano*, that has been published for the last six years.

One of the most important work that we have carried out is the production of the document "*Con voluntad y esperanza, Otro Puerto Rico es Possible*". (*With Will and Hope, Another Puerto Rico is Possible*)

. With much hard work, extensive debates and the participation of specialist on each topic, the document was presented and approved in an Extraordinary Assembly celebrated in December of 2011 in theater of the school of Law at the Interamercian University. It is our guide and it constitutes the Political Program of the MINH. Paradoxically, one of our biggest disagreements was not having succeeded in the massive spread of this program and its implementation. In this area we have a long way to walk. We have defined with great clarity what needs to be done, but we have failed in defining how to do it. We are in the right direction, although not at the speed with which we would like to go. It is the urgent challenge that we must face.

The policy of alliances that our organization has developed from the time of its establishment meant a new paradigm in the struggle for decolonization and independence. In a recent seminar on this topic, it became evident that although there is consensus about the policy of alliances of our organization, there have been occasions in which it has not been applied in a correct way, a topic that is to be continued in a next seminar.

It is fitting to point out that a petition founded by a MINH initiative, titled Hostosian Educators is an exercise of incalculable value in the implications of our policy of alliances. Teachers, educators, professors, in the public system as well as in the private, have incorporated themselves in this work group that meets periodically in the national committee of the MINH. Members of all kinds of professional and existing labor unions work together to look for points of consensus and carry them out. This project deserves to be expanded to other sectors that work for national independence and social justices.

One of the most satisfactory accomplishments is the creation of the Hostosian Youth, our relief generation. In the last Ordinary Assembly there were 8 young people elected to the 30 positions for delegates in the National Direction. The Hostosian Youth has developed a work agenda

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particular to their needs and has influenced through the participation in debates decisions taken by the National Direction, maximum organ of direction from assembly to assembly. The formation of the Hostosian Youth from East to West is already in the making.

While the youth organizes itself and new committees for struggling are formed, I should point out as a deficiency the lack of activity of some of the regional and municipal committees. This we have to attend to rapidly and it is a commitment of the Executive Committee and in particular to the Commission of Organization.

In the area of organization, we are pending the approval of proposed amends to the regulations of the MINH that would allow including as guest to the meetings of the National Direction representatives of other organizations struggling for our national rights, environmental and political, without the need to be members of the MINH. They would have the opportunity to participate in the debates and matters that are discussed in the National Direction with the right to voice but not to vote. This organizational innovation would put into practice our policy of inclusion and democratic participation. At the same time it would allow the directive body of the MINH to enrich its information and to listen to other visions and positions before making decisions and taking action.

These past ten years have been also marked by intense international work. Our policy of prioritizing in countries in our region has resulted in the strengthening and development of the Puerto Rico Mission in Cuba Juan Mari Bras, the work for decolonization in the United Nations, the links with our brothers in the Caribbean, Central and South America, particularly with the Bolivia Republic of Venezuela, with Nicaragua, El Salvador, Bolivia and Ecuador. For this our work in the Sao Pablo Forum and other regional entities has been of great importance. We have to firm up our work of solidarity with Uruguay, Argentina and Chile. Our seat as an observing member in the organization of Non-alienated Countries has also been of great importance. To maintain and go beyond the accomplishments we have had until now at the international level such as the declarations of the CELAC and of the countries of the ALBA with regard to the Caribbean and Latin American character of Puerto Rico, and also the support to the right for auto-determination and independence of Puerto Rico are fundamental objectives of our struggle.

It is not easy to summarize the accomplishments and the setbacks we have had in the space available. There are things left to be said. But I assure you that our struggle is being fortified. We will succeed in getting Oscar López Rivera out of prison, in a celebration of a Status Assembly in full exercise of our right to auto-determination that will lead us to decolonization and independence; we will continue defending the right of our people to free, quality education, a universal Health System, the development of an interior economy that is not dependent, and of an ample part-taking of the social justice that our people deserve.

For this we must think outside the box, with new and innovative ideas and different ways of struggling that take our oppressors by surprise by stimulating the imagination and the possibilities of our people's triumph. Let's concretize our slogan: "In the streets with the people, on our way to independence". This is the only way that our next ten years of struggle will bring us greater accomplishments and satisfactions.

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Lunes, 02 de Junio de 2014 03:28 -

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