

Los Angeles protesters: Take Cuba off ‘Terror’ list

written by Scott Scheffer
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Carlos Sirah of Black Alliance for Peace chaired the Los Angeles June 25 rally to take Cuba off the State Sponsors of Terrorism list. SLL photo: Maggie Vascassenno

A hundred or more people joined a June 25 protest in Los Angeles to demand that

the White House take Cuba off the State Sponsors of Terrorism (SSOT) list. The turnout included a broad range of progressive organizations in L.A.

Cuba was put on the SSOT list in the closing weeks of Donny Trump's term in the White House. At the same time, he added 243 more trade sanctions to the sixty-year-old U.S. blockade against revolutionary Cuba.

The SSOT is especially damaging to Cuba's economy. Some 70 international banks cut ties with Cuba within weeks of Trump's action, leaving little chance of being able to buy badly needed goods on the international market. The U.S. levies fines against banks that break the SSOT restrictions, which can collectively add up to billions of U.S. dollars. Even big European banks that had previously facilitated trade between Cuba and other countries no longer do so.

Cuba supporters throughout Los Angeles joined the effort to spread the word starting in April in response to a call put out by the National Network on Cuba for actions in as many places as possible on June 25. The L.A. action was initiated by the Harriet Tubman Center for Social Justice, but the groups working on it soon formed the June 25 Ad Hoc Committee.

Individuals and organizations joined the effort to build an event that could help amplify the message to Biden: Get Cuba off the SSOT and end the U.S. blockade.

Among the organizations that helped organize and participated in the protest were Black Alliance for Peace, Union del Barrio, Code Pink, Red Berets for Queers, Association of Raza Educators, Peace and Freedom Party, L.A. U.S. Hands off Cuba Committee, and Healthcare for US.

