

Cuba's Families Code shows: Queer people need a socialist revolution!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
January 26, 2023

Resúmenes RHC 2022



Nuevo Código de Las Familias en Cuba

Cuba's new Families Code: 'All rights for all people.'

Talk given by Melinda Butterfield, Struggle-La Lucha co-editor, at the webinar "What We Can Learn from Cuba's 'Code of Freedom' for Families," hosted by

Women In Struggle/Mujeres En Lucha on Jan. 22.

Good afternoon siblings, friends, and comrades.

It's an honor to follow the beautiful message of solidarity from Comrade Mariela Castro Espín. The organization she leads, Cuba's National Center for Sex Education (Cenesex), just celebrated its 35th anniversary, a tremendous milestone for the Cuban people and all progressive peoples of the world.

Marking the anniversary, the Transcuba Nacional organization said that Cenesex has "developed important research and contributions in the sciences that have aided the development of Cuban society in terms of sexual rights. It has educated and trained professionals and activists who bring about social transformations around the realities of human sexuality. The particular attention paid to trans people has made Cenesex a home of respect, love and inclusion."

What a contrast to the situation that queer people, especially trans people, face here in the United States in 2023!

Have you heard of Christynne Lili Wrene Wood? She is a retired African American city worker in Santee, a suburb of San Diego. This trans woman has become one of the latest targets of the anti-trans panic that has swept the country since last year.

On Dec. 29, Christynne was finishing up her weekly water aerobics class at the local YMCA. She showered and changed in the women's locker room as she always does. But that day, she was targeted for a transphobic attack. A 17-year-old girl was put up before the media afterward, claiming she was "traumatized" by seeing someone with "male genitalia" in the women's changing area.

Trans women are women, regardless of what genitalia they have. None of the women who regularly participate in water aerobics with Christynne had an issue changing with her. But the fact is, Christynne has had gender reassignment surgery,

so she could not have been mistaken for having “male genitalia.”

It was a set-up for the far-right crusade to demonize trans people. The lie was repeated by Tucker Carlson and other fascist mouthpieces. A hate rally was staged outside the Santee YMCA last week. Christynne had to listen to these lies being repeated as she counter-protested with supporters across the street.

Christynne explained to a reporter: “There’s a movie out right now about how that kind of a lie and hysteria can lead to tragedy. The movie’s about Emmett Till. The lies of a person got that child beat to death and that’s just the kind of group [here] that would love to pull a stunt like that. Thank God, I’ve got protection and people with me that see to it that I don’t suffer that kind of pain. But don’t you think that there aren’t people over there right now that would love to come over and rip me [apart] piece [by] piece?”

Since the beginning of this year – in just three weeks – more than 150 pieces of anti-LGBTQ2S legislation have been introduced in states across this country, primarily aimed at criminalizing trans lives. This includes bills to cut off all gender-affirming health care for adults as well as youth and to essentially make it illegal for trans people to exist in public.

Doctors and children’s hospitals are threatened with bombings. Neo-Nazis attempt to shut down drag events, aided by local cops. Parents who support their trans kids are threatened with prosecution.

What are the supposed friends of the LGBTQ2S community in Washington doing to stop this? Not a damn thing. They tell us to vote for them, the way they told women to vote for them before standing aside and letting abortion rights be stripped away. Meanwhile, supposed liberals like Hillary Clinton and the New York Times are joining in the anti-trans rhetoric, showing that this attack goes far beyond the Trumpist right.

The Biden administration and Congress have made it crystal clear that their priority is funding wars for empire on the other side of the world and continuing the six-decades-long illegal blockade of Cuba – not protecting the rights of people here.

That's why it's so important for queer people and all workers to learn from Cuba's example.

Here are some highlights of the new Families Code Cubans approved last September:

- Protection of all forms of families, including chosen families, with no discrimination;
- The parental relationship is based on responsibilities and duties;
- The rights of children and youth, elders and the disabled to independence, dignity, accessibility, and respect;
- Consequences for violence or other abuse in family situations;
- Equality of marriage and common law unions;
- Gender equality, including for trans and nonbinary Cubans;
- Equality of rights in adoption and technologically assisted methods like in vitro fertilization;
- Duty to contribute to the family and recognition of the value of domestic labor;
- Institutional and community responsibility to uphold these rights.

The guiding idea of the document is that family plurality, diversity, and human dignity are at the center of the Cuban Revolution. The definition of a family is now based on affection and emotional ties rather than blood relations. It's a "code of freedom" to choose the form of family that works best for its members.

I attended an event at the Cuban Mission to the United Nations, where diplomats talked about the new Families Code and answered questions. Two things really

jumped out at me. One was the genuine pride the Cuban comrades had for this accomplishment. The other was the number of people from nonprofits and legal services representing trans and queer communities here, who were desperate to learn how Cuba was able to accomplish this at a time when our rights are being mercilessly rolled back.

The diplomats explained the years-long process of consultations held throughout all of society, from neighborhoods and workplaces to mass organizations; how there were 25 drafts incorporating thousands of amendments suggested at these discussions. They talked about the decisive role of young people in arguing for updating the country's family code to be more inclusive and how they won their elders over to support the referendum.

And they talked about how this was not something that happened out of the blue - it was built up throughout the whole history of the Cuban Revolution, for more than 60 years - the struggle against patriarchy and the vestiges of capitalism and colonialism in everyday life.

This last point is very important. It was a diplomatic event, so the Cubans couldn't put too fine a point on it, but the essential thing is this: The Cuban people made a socialist revolution. And LGBTQ2S people in the U.S. need a socialist revolution here to secure our rights.

The U.S. ruling class has decided to go all in on scapegoating trans people. But they won't stop with us. The broader LGBTQ2S community is next on the chopping block.

The capitalist system is based on the principle of divide and rule. A historic struggle like the Stonewall Rebellion can shake society and win important reforms. But as long as capitalism exists, those gains are always in danger of being taken away. To truly secure our rights to equality, to decent jobs, to housing, education, and health care for all - including gender-affirming care - we need what Cuba has: a socialist

revolution.

It's time for the LGBTQ2S movement, and all people's movements, to reject the losing strategy of relying on the Democratic Party and capitalist electoral politics. We need a return to the militant struggles of Marsha P. Johnson and Sylvia Rivera, of ACT UP and Queer Nation, and of Leslie Feinberg. And while we do that, we need to keep our eyes on the prize: replacing divide-and-conquer capitalism with a society based on solidarity that puts people's needs first.

[Full text of the 2022 Families Code \(in Spanish\)](#)

[Comprehensive summary \(in English\)](#)



The U.S. blockade of Cuba hurts medical patients in both countries

written by Struggle - La Lucha
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Scientists in Cuba believe that the breakthroughs they have made in the healthcare and technology sectors should be used to save and improve lives beyond the country's borders. This is why the island nation has developed important scientific and medical [partnerships](#) with organizations and governments across the globe, including with those in [Mexico](#), [Palestine](#), [Angola](#), [Colombia](#), [Iran](#), and [Brazil](#). However, such collaborations are difficult due to the [blockade](#) imposed on Cuba by the United States, which has now been in place for the last six decades.

In a [conference](#), "Building Our Future," held in Havana in November 2022, which brought together youth from Cuba and the United States, scientists at the [Cuban Center of Molecular Immunology \(CIM\)](#) stated during a presentation that the blockade hurts the people of the United States, too. By lifting the sanctions against Cuba, the scientists argued, the people of the United States could have access to life-saving treatments being developed in Cuba, especially against diseases such as diabetes, which [ravage](#) working-class communities each year.

A cure for diabetes

Cuban scientists have developed both a [lung cancer vaccine](#) and a groundbreaking [diabetes treatment](#). The new diabetes treatment, Heberprot-P, [developed](#) by the Cuban Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (CIGB), can reduce leg amputations of people with diabetic foot ulcers by more than [four times](#). The medication [contains](#) a recombinant human epidermal growth factor that, when injected into a foot ulcer, accelerates its healing process, thereby, reducing diabetes-related amputations. And yet, despite the fact that the medication has been registered in Cuba [since 2006](#), and has been registered in several other countries since, people in the United States are [unable](#) to get access to Heberprot-P.

Diabetes was the [eighth](#) leading cause of death in the United States in 2020, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [killing more than 100,000 patients in that year](#). “Foot ulcers are among the most common complications of patients who have diabetes,” which can escalate into lower limb amputations, [according](#) to a report in the National Center for Biotechnology Information. Each year, around 73,000 “[non-traumatic lower extremity amputations](#)” are performed on people who have diabetes in the U.S. These amputations occur at a disproportionate rate depending on the race of a patient, being far more prevalent among Black and Brown people suffering from diabetes. Many point to [racial economic disparities and systemic medical racism](#) as the reason for this.

“If you go into low-income African American neighborhoods, it is a war zone... You see people wheeling themselves around in wheelchairs,” Dr. Dean Schillinger, a medical professor at the University of California-San Francisco, told [KHN](#). According to the KHN article, “Amputations are considered a ‘mega-disparity’ and dwarf nearly every other health disparity by race and ethnicity.”

The life expectancy of a patient with post-diabetic lower limb amputation is significantly reduced, according to [various reports](#). “[P]atients with diabetes-related

amputations have a high risk of mortality, with a five-year survival rate of 40–48 percent regardless of the etiology of the amputation.” Heberprot-P could help tens of thousands of patients avoid such amputations, however, due to the blockade, U.S. patients cannot access this treatment. People in the U.S. have a vested interest in dismantling the U.S. blockade of Cuba.

“So after five years [post-amputation], that’s the most you can live, and we are preventing that from happening,” said Rydell Alvarez Arzola, a researcher at CIM, in a presentation given to the U.S. and Cuban youth during the conference in Havana. “And that also is something that could bring both of our peoples [in Cuba and the U.S.] together to fight... to eliminate [the blockade].”

Cuban health care under blockade

Perhaps one of Cuba’s proudest achievements is a [world-renowned health care system](#) that has thrived despite economic devastation and a 60-year-long blockade.

After the fall of Cuba’s primary trading partner, the Soviet Union, in 1991, the island saw a GDP decrease of [35 percent over three years](#), blackouts, and a [nosedive](#) in caloric intake. Yet, despite these overwhelming challenges, Cuba never wavered in its commitment to providing universal health care. Universal health care, or access to free and quality health care for all, is a [long-standing demand](#) of people’s movements in the United States that has never been implemented largely due to the [for-profit model](#) of the health care industry and enormous corporate interests in the sector.

As other nations were enacting neoliberal [austerity measures](#), which [drastically cut](#) social services in the 1980s and 1990s, Cuba’s public health care spending [increased by 13 percent](#) from 1990 to 1994. Cuba successfully raised its doctor-to-patient ratio to one doctor for every [202 Cubans](#) in the mid-1990s, a far better statistic than the United States’ ratio of one doctor for every 300 people, according to a [2004 census](#).

As the blockade begins its seventh decade, Cuba is not only upholding universal health care but also continues to be at the forefront of scientific developments globally.

This was evident during the COVID-19 crisis. Cuba, faced with the inability to purchase vaccines developed by U.S. pharmaceutical companies due to the U.S. blockade, developed [five vaccines](#). The nation not only achieved its goal of creating [one of the most effective COVID-19 vaccines](#) but also launched the [first mass COVID-19 vaccination campaign for children](#) from two to 18 years old in September 2021.

To share knowledge without restrictions

Despite its achievements, Cuban health care still faces serious, life-threatening limitations due to the economic blockade. CIM, for example, has struggled to find international companies willing to carry out vital services for them. Claudia Plasencia, a CIM researcher, explained during the conference that CIM had signed a contract with a German gene synthesis company which later backed out because it had signed a new contract with a U.S. company. “They could not keep processing our samples, they could not keep doing business with Cuba,” Plasencia said.

Arzola explained how it is virtually impossible to purchase top-of-the-line equipment due to trade restrictions. “A flow cytometer is a machine that costs a quarter-million dollars... even if my lab has the money, I cannot buy the best machine in the world, which is from the U.S., everyone knows that,” he said. Even if CIM were to buy such a machine from a third party, it cannot utilize the repair services from the United States. “I cannot buy these machines even if I have the money, because I would not be able to fix them. You cannot spend a quarter-million dollars every six months [buying a new machine]... even though you know that this [machine] is the best for your patients.”

I spoke to Marianniz Diaz, a young woman scientist at CIM. When asked what we in the U.S. could do to help CIM's scientists, her answer was straightforward: "The principal thing you can do is eliminate the blockade."

"I would like us to have an interaction without restrictions, so we [Cuba and the U.S.] can share our science, our products, [and] our knowledge," she said.

This article was produced in partnership by [Peoples Dispatch](#) and [Globetrotter](#). Natalia Marques is a writer at Peoples Dispatch, an organizer, and a graphic designer based in New York City.



Alicia Jrapko presente! Now and always

written by Struggle - La Lucha
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Havana, Cuba, Jan. 11 — Ali, as all of us who had the honor of sharing dreams and militancy used to call her, went to another dimension exactly one year ago at night.

It is still hard for us to assimilate the physical absence of our dear companion, sister, and friend Alicia Jrapko, Argentine revolutionary who accompanied so many struggles of our peoples and dedicated more than three decades of her fruitful life to the defense of the Cuban Revolution.

Her work from the United States for the return of Elián Gonzalez, the freedom of the Cuban Five, and always against the draconian blockade consecrated her as one of our great referents, to whom the people and the leadership of the Cuban Revolutionary Government showed immense respect and affection.

You are present, Ali, in every small and big thing we achieve, in every challenge, and in all our struggles.

You live in our memory, in the love of your children and grandchildren, in the love of your dear comrade Bill.

Your smile continues to enlighten us; from it, with your immense courage and tenderness, you defy those who do so much harm to the people of this island. They will never succeed in turning back this Revolution that honored you as the faithful sister and companion that you will always be.

This past Saturday, it was Alicia's children's turn to show their love by honoring her in a large tribute in Oakland, California, the city she lived in.

Alicia Jrapko Lives!

International Committee for Peace, Justice, and Dignity to the Peoples

Source: [Cuba en Resumen](https://www.struggle-la-lucha.org/cuba/page/18/)



Cuba: Assessing 2022 and the prospects for 2023

written by Struggle - La Lucha
January 26, 2023

This year has been a defining year for Cuba. Let's say it has been like the litmus test after two years of pandemic and important domestic changes. The economic measures implemented in 2021 designed to improve economic conditions did not reach its expectations in 2022, which remains the main concern of the island's population.

In the political and social sphere, there were also several challenges, including the update of the Family and Penal Codes, as well as the beginning of the electoral process of electing a new government in March 2023. All this took place amid a changing and convulsive international scenario, marked by skyrocketing inflation that hammered underdeveloped countries like Cuba.

Given this reality, what has been the balance for a country where many decisions can be questioned but never its capacity to reinvent itself and try again and again to

move forward despite facing obstacles that, at first sight, always seem daunting.

The year began with the war in Ukraine, which heavily impacted Cuba despite the geographical distance. Russia is one of the island's main trading partners, so the Western sanctions hindered this commercial exchange while contributing to a dramatic slowdown of tourism. of the main tourist market at the time.

On the other hand, the price of food and fuel on the international market skyrocketed. The speculation hidden behind the mask of the war persistently harms the Cuban economy since we import most of the food and fuel we consume, especially those used in car transportation and small-scale electricity generation. It added stress for an economy shattered by the pandemic and struggling with the most comprehensive, far-reaching sanctions regime ever known: the U.S. blockade.

As a result, several sectors of the economy had to reduce their production, leaving the country unable to cap the domestic demand. As a matter of course, the situation worsened when the national thermoelectric system began to collapse due to lack of maintenance. Hence, people had to face long and persistent power cuts that fostered social discontent.

Having to cope with these chronic economic adversities unleashed a concerning migratory flow. According to statistics, 2022 has been the highest in the last 40 years. The figures are alarming and will hurt Cuba in the medium and long run, but the dangerous departures of many are not necessarily a defection of their country but represent a level of desperation based on fatigue. The corporate media has tried to portray it in a political framework as the failure of Cuba, conveniently ignoring that the dramatic increase in the migratory flow is regional and international and not exclusive to Cuba or its socialist project. Much of this can be blamed on the neo-liberal model centered in the U.S. that dominates and squeezes everything out of the majority while a few become obscenely rich.

On top of this, Cuba was shocked in 2022 by three devastating events; the explosion of the Saratoga Hotel in Havana on May 6, the Matanzas supertanker explosion and fire on August 5, and Hurricane Ian, which swept Pinar del Rio Province for over 7 hours on September 27. Beyond the billions in economic losses, the most regrettable fact was the death of over 70 Cubans. While each one of these events was devastating, the response of the Cuban government and people was extraordinary and, with the solidarity of international friends, showed resilience and will to stand back up after each of these blows.

Those in Florida and Washington betting on destroying the socialist project have not wasted an opportunity to try and foster social chaos and economic breakdown.

Every hospital without medicines, the long lines to get basic stuff and food, every broken power plant, the enormous efforts to keep up the fuel and food supply, every life or death matter of ours was seen cynically as a window of opportunity for them. This goes beyond the limits of ideological differences to one of extreme inhumanity that festers inside the empire. How else could you describe such a policy that thrives off depriving others of the most elementary access to resources and normal commerce?

We can't ignore the setbacks of the progressive forces in Latin America in 2022, but we cannot forget our hard-fought victories either, and they will persist over the designs of the United States and its faithful minions: the regional oligarchies because history is on our side.

The IX Summit of the Americas in Los Angeles in June of this year was a clear example of this. Only the coordinated action of several leaders, among them Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador (Mexico), Xiomara Castro (Honduras), Ralph Gonsalves (St. Vincent and the Grenadines), and other Caribbean nations, could prevent the silence and isolation the United States tried to impose on Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela from even attending the dialogue.

In this sense, the electoral victories this year in Honduras, Colombia, and Brazil are an encouragement in the building of a strong leftist alliance in the region, which would help Cuba to overcome the obstacles imposed by the current international economic crisis.

While it is true that little good economic news has come to Cuba this year, the country took a big step forward, politically speaking. The enactment of the Family Code in October was a victory not just for the government but for millions of Cubans who saw many of their demands settled by the law. It is a revolutionary step towards true equality in every sense of the word.

In the same way, the Criminal Code was passed. It brought benefits like the expansion of inmates' rights and accessory penalties, the recognition of crimes on social media, and the strengthening of sanctions against corruption and for those who get funds from foreign agents to commit crimes.

The electoral calendar began with the election of representatives to the local governments. The process was held amid a difficult situation and with relatively low levels of participation. However, beyond the questions this could raise about governmental management, it served as a process to calibrate the social mood and correct the governmental agenda.

It has not been an easy year, not for Cuba or the region, but an objective analysis leads us to a positive balance. Today, thanks to the sacrifice of thousands of Cuban workers and international aid, the thermoelectric network has recovered, and power cuts have disappeared. On the other hand, the tourism sector, one of the country's main hard currency income sources, is slowly taking off despite the incessant discrediting campaigns against it.

In line with this trend, the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC) and other financial institutions forecast a minimum GDP growth of 3.5% and a slowdown

in inflation, which will remain the main economic problem. On the political front, the most important event will be the March elections to renew the parliament and the government. It will be another massive exercise of democracy whose results will decide the strategy in how to advance in the economic recovery and strengthening of the socialist system.

A favorable regional context, such as the present one, can only help Cuba. The current correlation of forces inspires hope, especially after the results obtained in the summits of the Community of Latin America and Caribbean States (CELAC), the Community of Caribbean States, and the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America - Peoples' Trade Agreement (ALBA-TCP). No one can say what the future holds, but the only sure thing is the Cubans' determined will to move forward.

Source: [Resumen Latinoamericano - U.S.](#)



Cuba goes on a diplomatic tour in

an increasingly multipolar world

written by Struggle - La Lucha

January 26, 2023

On November 27 morning, Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel, [walked](#) into a voting station in the Playa neighborhood to vote in Cuba's municipal elections. He had [landed](#) in Havana an hour earlier from an intense tour of Algeria, Russia, Turkey, and China.

The tour, which [started](#) on November 16, was both a journey into the [past](#) of the nonaligned world that Cuba played an integral role in building and an essential step into the future toward the establishment of a multipolar world. Each stop also served as a reminder of the strong relationships based on cooperation and mutual respect that Cuba has been cultivating since [1959](#). Undoubtedly, the Cuban Revolution and its internationalism placed Cuba on the map and gave it an outsized role in world politics.

Yet this tour took place against a complex backdrop. The country's recent economic and financial situation has been [characterized](#) by crisis since the intensification of the United States blockade under former President Donald Trump and President Joe Biden, with the imposition of [243](#) unilateral sanctions and the inclusion of Cuba on the state sponsors of terrorism list. Add to this the impact of COVID-19 over the past three years, [several](#) natural disasters, and a [series](#) of unfortunate accidents that have negatively impacted Cuba.

Díaz-Canel also traveled abroad to explore with Cuba's strategic partners the state of multilateralism and development in a rapidly changing world in the wake of the war in Ukraine, NATO aggression, and the growing [fragility](#) of U.S. hegemony. Cuba's [achievements](#) and potential, despite being besieged, served as the basis for discussions during the tour relating to areas of [mutual interest](#) such as renewable

energy, biotechnology, health care, communications, and industry.

During the tour of these countries, several new agreements were signed that pointed to a desire to help Cuba. From [offers](#) of setting up renewable energy power plants to more regular oil shipments and plans to modernize Cuban industries, it's clear that Algeria, Russia, Turkey, and China do not want Cuba to fall under the weight of Washington's sanctions regime. "It is obvious that sanctions have an effect on the fact that our relations remain below their true potential," Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan [pointed](#) out during a press conference with his Cuban counterpart in Ankara on November 23.

This 11-day tour [ended](#) in China, where perhaps the most challenging yet essential [conversations](#) were held. Under the weight of an intensified U.S. blockade and severe limitations to its foreign currency reserves, Cuba has been unable to service its debt with China. "There is enormous sensitivity in the Chinese leadership, particularly in President Xi Jinping," [commented](#) Díaz-Canel afterward. "There is an express will in him, even with indications in official talks, that a solution must be found to all of Cuba's problems, regardless of the problems with the debt." Against the United States' efforts to restrain Cuba, Díaz-Canel asserted how China is "betting on the development of the country based on the cooperation that they can give us."

This article was produced by [Globetrotter](#). Manolo De Los Santos is the co-executive director of the [People's Forum](#) and is a researcher at [Tricontinental: Institute for Social Research](#). He co-edited, most recently, "Viviremos: Venezuela vs. Hybrid War" ([LeftWord Books/1804 Books](#), 2020) and "Comrade of the Revolution: Selected Speeches of Fidel Castro" ([LeftWord Books/1804 Books](#), 2021). He is a co-coordinator of the [People's Summit for Democracy](#).



Cuban president: Causes of Ukraine conflict must be found in aggressive U.S. policy and NATO expansion towards Russia's borders

written by Melinda Butterfield

January 26, 2023

Speech delivered by Miguel Mario Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba and President of the Republic, in the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, on Nov. 22, 2022, "Year 64 of the Revolution."

"Cuba strongly condemns the sanctions that are imposed today unilaterally and unfairly on the Russian Federation. The causes of the current conflict in this area must be found in the aggressive policy of the United States and in the expansion of NATO towards Russia's borders, which Cuba has systematically denounced in international forums. Cuba, as it has expressed on many occasions, is in favor of a

negotiated solution to the current conflict.”

Dear Mr. Volodin, Chairman of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation;

Dear Comrade Melnikov, First Deputy Chairman of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation;

Dear deputies:

Thank you for that warmth that friendly arms always have and for the opportunity that you give me to speak before the plenary of the State Duma. (Applause)

On behalf of the people and the government of the Republic of Cuba, I convey the most cordial and affectionate greetings to all the deputies of this legislature. (Applause)

Parliamentary relations between Russia and Cuba constitute an important pillar of bilateral ties and a key piece for the promotion and development of our economic, commercial, financial and cooperation ties.

In recent years, these relations have deepened remarkably, the exchange between our delegations has grown, even despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

The president of the State Duma visited us in February of this year and the president of the National Assembly of People’s Power, comrade Esteban Lazo Hernández, will visit Moscow shortly.

Our people sincerely appreciate the resolution that this legislative body has approved annually for more than 25 years, demanding an end to the policy of economic, commercial and financial blockade that the government of the United States of America has imposed on Cuba for more than 60 years. We appreciate that

gesture and value it very much.

Trump and Biden tighten blockade

Dear deputies:

The economic situation in Cuba is complex at the present time due to a group of fundamentally external factors. In the first place, the intensification of the economic, commercial and financial blockade of the United States in a way that is unprecedented in the history of this cruel and genocidal policy.

Since 2019, the former president of the United States, Donald Trump, applied 243 measures that have affected the main sectors of the economy that pay taxes to the National Economic and Social Development Plan until 2030. The current government of President Biden maintains the vast majority of these in force.

To this is added the economic impact of COVID-19, especially for international tourism, the main source of income for the island, as well as the effects of climate change and the current global crisis.

In these difficult circumstances, Cuba has the support and understanding of its closest friends, including the Russian Federation and, of course, the deputies of this legislative body who can play a fundamental role in promoting important projects in the economic sphere. (Applause)

Political relations between the Russian Federation and Cuba are excellent, there is broad agreement on the main issues on the international agenda and decisive cooperation in international bodies. However, the full development of our economic, commercial, financial and cooperation ties is still pending to bring them to the same level that political relations have today, and that must be a priority. It is a task for both legislative bodies to work in this direction.

Cooperation between Russia and Cuba

I want to highlight, from the feelings of gratitude of the Cuban people, that in the midst of the difficult circumstances of today's world and the complex situation that both the Russian Federation and the Republic of Cuba are experiencing, due to the sustained increase in unfair sanctions on the part of the imperialist powers against our two nations, there is a whole group of exchanges and mutual cooperation projects that were successfully developed at this stage; among them, the successes of a Russian company in terms of geological prospecting and work with oil in the Boca de Jaruco wells, where new technologies have been applied and there is an increase in production and yields.

An investment from a Russian company was also opened in the Mariel Special Development Zone for the diagnosis and repair of the Kamaz technologies that exist in our country.

Work has been underway, with support from the Russian Federation, on the modernization project for an important steel plant in Cuba, La Antillana de Acero, and we expect to conclude the first phase of this project in the coming months, which has to do with the modernization of its steel mill.

On the other hand, the modernization works of the Villa Clara mechanical plant, another important steel development company in our country, have been completed.

We have had the support of humanitarian aid from the Russian Federation in various complex moments for our country, such as the incidents of the Saratoga hotel explosion, the fire at the Supertanker Base in Matanzas Bay, Hurricane Ian, and also in the pandemic peaks we faced during COVID-19.

The facilities that the Russian government has created by granting scholarships for university and postgraduate studies to a group of Cuban professionals are working

very effectively, and their potentialities are expanding.

On the other hand, there was an important presence of the Russian business community, which we corroborated with the ambassador in Cuba when we inaugurated, before leaving for this tour, the Russian Federation pavilion at the Havana International Fair.

We have also received support with locomotives for the Cuban railway. We have received a lot of support when we have requested fuel to face the energy situation in our country.

I also want to highlight a particular episode that we had to face in Cuba during COVID-19, and if it had not been for the effort, understanding and support of the Russian Federation we would have had many difficulties. It was precisely when, in the midst of the pandemic peak with the Delta strain, we had a defect in our oxygen production plant.

At that time, our intensive care rooms had a large number of patients who needed oxygen supply, and in the face of this stoppage, our reserves were practically depleted because the levels of oxygen consumption had increased. We made a request for support to the government of the Russian Federation, which immediately responded with a plane loaded with oxygen containers that arrived in Cuba.

This is a gesture that we will never forget, because it is help that is given from understanding, from solidarity, from a deep humanist conviction and at a difficult time. Only true friends do that. (Applause)

U.S., NATO to blame for conflict

Dear deputies:

Cuba strongly condemns the sanctions that are imposed today unilaterally and

unfairly on the Russian Federation. The causes of the current conflict in this area must be found in the aggressive policy of the United States and in the expansion of NATO towards Russia's borders, which Cuba has systematically denounced in international forums. Cuba, as it has expressed on many occasions, is in favor of a negotiated solution to the current conflict.

Dear deputies:

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to thank the heroic Russian people and government for the gesture of dedicating a square in this memorable city of Moscow to place a monument dedicated to the invincible historical leader of the Cuban Revolution, Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz. (Applause) Through my words come also the sincere appreciation of all our people for this symbolic gesture. In this act, a history of solidarity and brotherhood that can never be forgotten is synthesized.

Every time Cuba was faced with challenges and urgency that seemed impossible to face and solve, Russia's generous hand was among the first extended. And thanks to this we overcame the challenges. These are the reasons why we feel the warmth that a dear family offers.

Thank you very much. (Applause)

[Translation: Chicago ALBA Solidarity](#)



Biden, everyone knows Cuba is not a terrorist country!

written by Melinda Butterfield

January 26, 2023

The Biden administration certainly must have gotten the message after the United Nations General Assembly [condemned the U.S. starvation blockade](#) on Cuba by a vote of 185 to 2 and for the 30th consecutive year. Country after country denounced the U.S. economic war while making special emphasis to remove Cuba from the spurious, arbitrary U.S. State Department State Sponsors of Terrorism (SSOT) list.

Both capitalist parties may thumb their noses in imperial fashion at the world's U.N. votes, but already two U.S. labor organizations are telling the Biden administration to pay attention to voices in the U.S. beyond the minority in South Florida and take Cuba off the SSOT.

At the end of October, the Inlandboatmen's Union of the Pacific, Southern California Region, [issued a resolution](#) that "strongly urges President Biden and Congress ... to remove Cuba from the United States list of state sponsors of terrorism." Now, just

weeks later, the Troy, New York, Labor Council's [Nov. 16 resolution](#) also called for the Biden administration to remove Cuba from the SSOT.

A [draft resolution](#) calling on the Biden administration to use its executive authority to remove Cuba from the State Department's sanction-enhancing list is being circulated among city councils, state legislatures, labor organizations, county commissions, school boards and others. Already [resolutions from elected bodies](#) opposing U.S. policy toward Cuba have been passed that represent more than 40 million U.S. constituents.

Facts should matter. The Obama administration removed Cuba from the unilateral State Department list. Nothing had changed when on Jan. 12, 2021, outgoing President Donald Trump used his authority to besmirch Cuba by declaring it a SSOT.

And who is the U.S. government to create such a list, considering the havoc it wreaks on the planet? Cuba has been an example of solidarity throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, saving lives at home by developing its own vaccines and across the world with the Henry Reeve Brigade. Even before the SSOT designation, some 243 surgically-honed additional sanctions targeted Cuba's economy in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, intentionally harming the Cuban people.

As Cuba's Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez Parilla said on Nov. 3 at the United Nations General Assembly debate on Cuba's resolution to end the U.S. blockade:

"The financial persecution has been further reinforced with the arbitrary and fraudulent inclusion of our country in the State Department's unilateral list of alleged countries sponsoring terrorism, which exponentially raises the so-called Country Risk and forces us to pay for any merchandise even at double its price in the international market.

“Such action is inadmissible against a nation that is a victim of terrorism, which even today suffers the instigation of violence and terrorist acts from U.S. territory; and whose conduct of firm rejection and persecution of any form or manifestation of terrorism is unimpeachable and recognized.

“It was a lethal measure imposed by the previous Republican administration, only nine days [before] leaving the White House. The current president could correct it with just a signature. It would be the morally correct and lawful thing to do.”

This is why the member groups of the National Network on Cuba are focusing their work in the upcoming year on removing Cuba from the SSOT list - a step toward ending the unjust, cruel one-sided economic war on Cuba. What more can *you* do?



The world stands with Cuba once again!

written by Struggle - La Lucha
January 26, 2023

Once again, the United States has been left alone in its efforts to stifle Cuba. The

General Assembly of the United Nations once again pronounced itself overwhelmingly against the economic blockade that Washington insists on maintaining against the island.

The UN member countries voted this Thursday on the Cuban resolution “Necessity of putting an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.” On this occasion, the document had 185 votes in favor, two against (the United States and its unconditional ally Israel), and two abstentions (Jair Bolsonaro’s Brazil and Ukraine).

Today, the world is with Cuba, and it is no surprise. That U.S. policy is an outdated and ineffective measure that hasn’t achieved and will not achieve its objective and has ended up discrediting and isolating the United States itself.

It has already been 30 years of continuous defeats. Since 1992, the Caribbean island, besieged and on the verge of economic asphyxiation, has presented this resolution before the UN in New York. Today, not even U.S. citizens themselves support this policy of hatred. Proof of this is that two nights ago, in the mythical Chrysler skyscraper in the Big Apple, a luminous sign caught the attention of the city dwellers and the world: “Down with the Blockade,” next to an image of the Cuban flag.

At the top of the building, the messages “Sanctions are a violation of human rights,” “Biden, vote for peace and justice” were also read; images that have been on the front page of major international media in the last hours, prior to the vote. New York, the American people, and the world want peace, but the White House doesn’t want to listen to these demands. It is stuck in the past, and without an ounce of courage, Biden has followed in the footsteps of previous administrations, Republican and Democrat alike, who adhere to the single notion of crushing Cuba and the example it projects to the world.

During its first opportunity to pronounce itself, in 2021, the administration of Joseph Biden voted against the resolution, and today it rejected once again the document, which shows, among other painful facts, that during the first 14 months of the Biden administration, the damage to the Cuban economy is estimated at \$6.35 billion, equivalent to more than \$15 million per day.

Cuban authorities have repeatedly denounced the blockade that has not only been in place for more than six decades but that it has intensified in recent years. Besides, the unilateral and fraudulent designation of Cuba as a state sponsor of terrorism reinforces the impact of that policy of economic asphyxiation.

Fidel's words expressed 13 years ago came to life to me today: "The cynicism of U.S. policy hurts. It speaks of democracy while it includes Cuba on the list of terrorist countries, applies the murderous Cuban Adjustment Act exclusively to our nation, and blocks it economically."

According to Cuban journalist Elson Concepción, being blockaded continues to be the price paid by those of us who declare ourselves free and sovereign, a condition conquered during years of struggle against Spanish colonialism, first, and U.S. neocolonialism, later.

"The blockade causes Cuban children to suffer the lack of some medicine, the implant of an organ, or the use of a reagent, for the ridiculous reason of having only 10% of U.S. components," he added.

During his election campaign, Biden promised to change the U.S. policy path toward Cuba, but this has not happened. Meanwhile, Cuban families suffer when their children decide to emigrate in an unsafe way; they suffer from the lack of indispensable goods, such as food and medicine. They also suffer because they want their country to grow economically. After all, there's no better place to live than where you were born and raised.

For the thirtieth time, the world said “No” to the blockade and is anxiously waiting for this to be the year of definitive changes. The U.S. would be a better place for it, a fairer one.

Source: [Resumen Latinoamericano - US](#)



Demonstrations in New York, Los Angeles and other cities call for an end to the blockade on Cuba

written by Struggle - La Lucha
January 26, 2023

Large demonstrations on the East and West coasts of the US took place yesterday calling for the end of the Blockade of Cuba as the annual vote in the General Assembly of the UN approaches this week. This will mark the 30th occasion when the overwhelming majority of countries of the world will stand up together in solidarity with the people of Cuba in their defiant struggle and dignified struggle against US

imperialism.

New York

In New York over 200 people marched from Times Square, across busy 42nd Street, to the US-UN office on 1st Avenue demanding that Cuba be taken off Washington's list of state sponsors of terrorism, a measure designed to suffocate every aspect of Cuba's ability to access the world market, to end all trade and travel restrictions and to end the over 62-year-old illegal blockade of the island. The march was led by a contingent of 20 Cuban-Americans who traveled from Miami for the protest.

Milagros Rivera traveling from her besieged island spoke representing the Puerto Rican Committee in Solidarity with Cuba at the NY rally. The FBI recently harassed Rivera and members of her group for traveling to Cuba to deliver humanitarian aid.

Los Angeles

According to Cuba News around 150 people protested in front of the Westwood Federal Building on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles, the event had broad representation and was organized by the Los Angeles Hands off Cuba Committee. The protest also demanded that Biden overturn the 243 sanctions slapped on Cuba by the Trump Administration, something he could do with a stroke of the pen.

Many other US cities also held protests including Brunswick, Maine, Portland, Oregon, Duluth, Minnesota, and Laurel, Maryland.

This week more than 20 demonstrations will be taking place across the US to coincide with the vote in the UN to find the complete list with times and locations of

the solidarity activities go to the web page of the [National Network on Cuba](#).

In San Francisco the demonstration will take place on Thursday, November 3, at 4:30 pm at the Federal Building at Seventh and Mission followed by a march to UN Plaza. The event is being sponsored by the Bay Area Saving Lives, Answer Coalition, Code Pink, Venceremos Brigade, DSA, and Task Force on the Americas and endorsed by a number of other Bay Area organizations

Source: [Resumen Latinoamericano - US](#)



The sport of marking the enemy

written by Struggle - La Lucha
January 26, 2023



On Monday, Oct. 24, at noon Twitter users noticed a modification to the tagging policy. The social media platform began tagging a group of public media outlets as “affiliated with the Cuban government” and the tag would in turn appear on messages sent or shared from any individual account that linked to those publications’ websites. On Tuesday, Facebook shut down a score of profiles of supposed supporters of the Cuban Revolution but left hundreds that publish manuals for homemade bombs, call to burn police stations, announce armed expeditions, disclose private data for political assassination, threaten and insult generally from accounts abroad.

As if waging an online video game war, the U.S. platforms have decided this week to direct their laser sight into Cuba’s quadrant to mark and silence the “characters” of an enemy that has no way to defend itself.

Some might argue that it’s honorable to be labeled as a publicly funded government media outlet, and it certainly is. But Twitter does not intend to glorify Granma, Cubadebate, Radio Habana Cuba, Juventud Rebelde, and others, but to reduce the dissemination of their messages.

Without prior notice and in a beastly manner, the transnational has extended its control policies to the Caribbean, the rush to erase uncomfortable voices, the hypocritical correction of its community standards, and, once again, it exercises censorship on a global scale, simply by tweaking its algorithms and without the

procedures that would allow justifying such decisions. To top it all, it considers private media to be impartial and more genuine than their publicly funded counterparts, so that on planet Twitter anything that smacks of private interest is off-label. In this biased view, users have no right to judge content on its merits.

But the biggest absurdity of all is that it is a U.S. government-linked corporation like Twitter that labels others as “media affiliated” with a state. It’s not hard to find evidence that the platform has worked in increasing intimacy with the White House ever since U.S. politicians began pressuring tech companies to regulate content. In a 2011 legal filing easy to find online, Twitter agreed with the Federal Trade Commission to “implement, monitor and adjust its security measures” under government observation and has since turned over thousands of users’ data to government agencies.

Forbes magazine reported in August that the U.S. tops the list of governments demanding data be handed over to tech platforms, with nearly two million user accounts handed over since 2013. In the election that brought Biden to the White House, Twitter was one of many Silicon Valley corporations that worked directly with U.S. government agencies to determine what content should be removed in order to “secure” the election contest.

Whenever Twitter reports that it has purged thousands of accounts suspected of inauthentic behavior and acting at the direction of foreign governments, it will never be accounts from NATO countries or other friends of the U.S. government, and it doesn’t take much imagination to explain the cause. The favorite sanctioned ones are Russia, China, Iran, Venezuela, and Cuba, of course.

On May 12, 2020, the platform blocked 526 profiles managed from the island. It did not explain its decision to the users who saw their accounts abruptly canceled, but the next day, on May 13, Michael Kozak, then Acting Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs, told the press that the State Department had identified

“more than four dozen Cuban accounts” that violated Twitter’s policies – announced by the government agency, not the super and “independent” private company.

Almost simultaneously, The Miami Herald published statements from another official on the progress of relations with Twitter: “We have an ongoing dialogue with technology companies and are working with them to share our thoughts on attempts by state and non-state actors to leverage their platforms to spread disinformation and propaganda,” said Lea Gabrielle, director of the Global Engagement Center (GEC), also at the State Department.

Facebook’s track record as a U.S. government-affiliated media outlet is even darker and quite well-known. I cite as a sample the scandal starting in 2021 by the then White House spokeswoman, Jen Psaki, who told reporters that the executive compiled lists of people who publish on that platform “problematic” content so that Facebook “can remove them”.

Journalist Glenn Greenwald, of The Intercept, reacted angrily: “Union of corporate and state power, one of the classic hallmarks of fascism”. Greenwald was talking about Facebook, but this could be a great label to hang on Twitter as well.

Source: [Cubadebate](#), translation [Resumen Latinoamericano – US](#)

