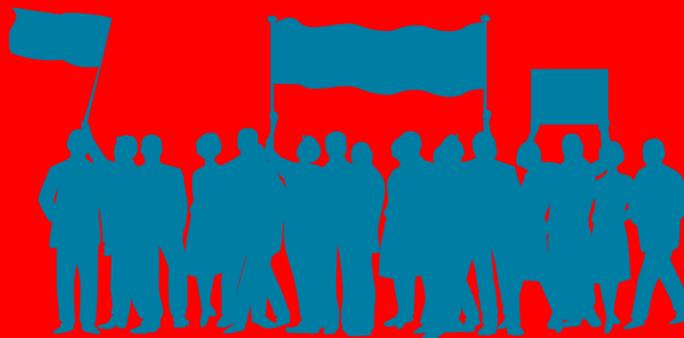
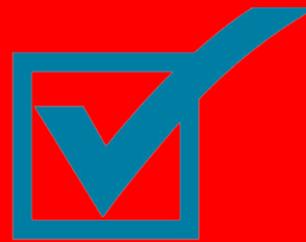




CUBA, MEMBER STATE  
TO THE HUMAN  
RIGHTS COUNCIL.

2021-2023



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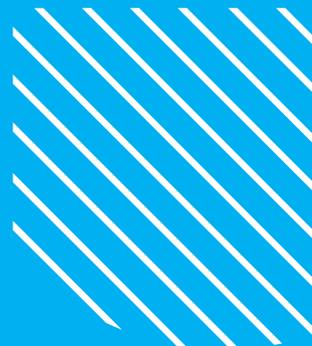
## »» INTRODUCTION »»

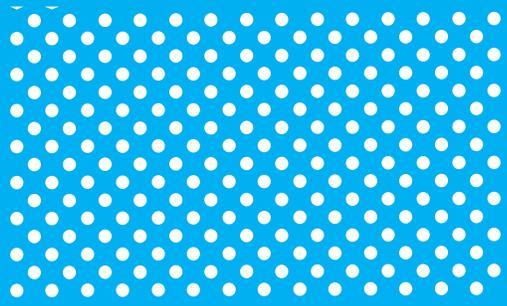
The promotion and protection of all human rights for all has been a priority for Cuba. In accordance with the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the promotion and protection of human rights in Cuba is based on the universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated nature of these rights. Cuba has addressed this issue in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing, and granting all rights the same emphasis.

Due to the political will of the Government and the active popular participation in all spheres of life, and despite the negative effect of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States for six decades, in violation of the United Nations Charter and International Law, Cuba has obtained important achievements in the promotion and protection of human rights. Some of these achievements are addressed in the present document.



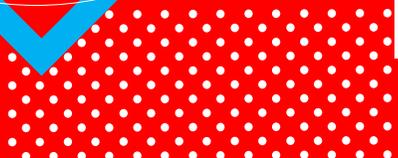
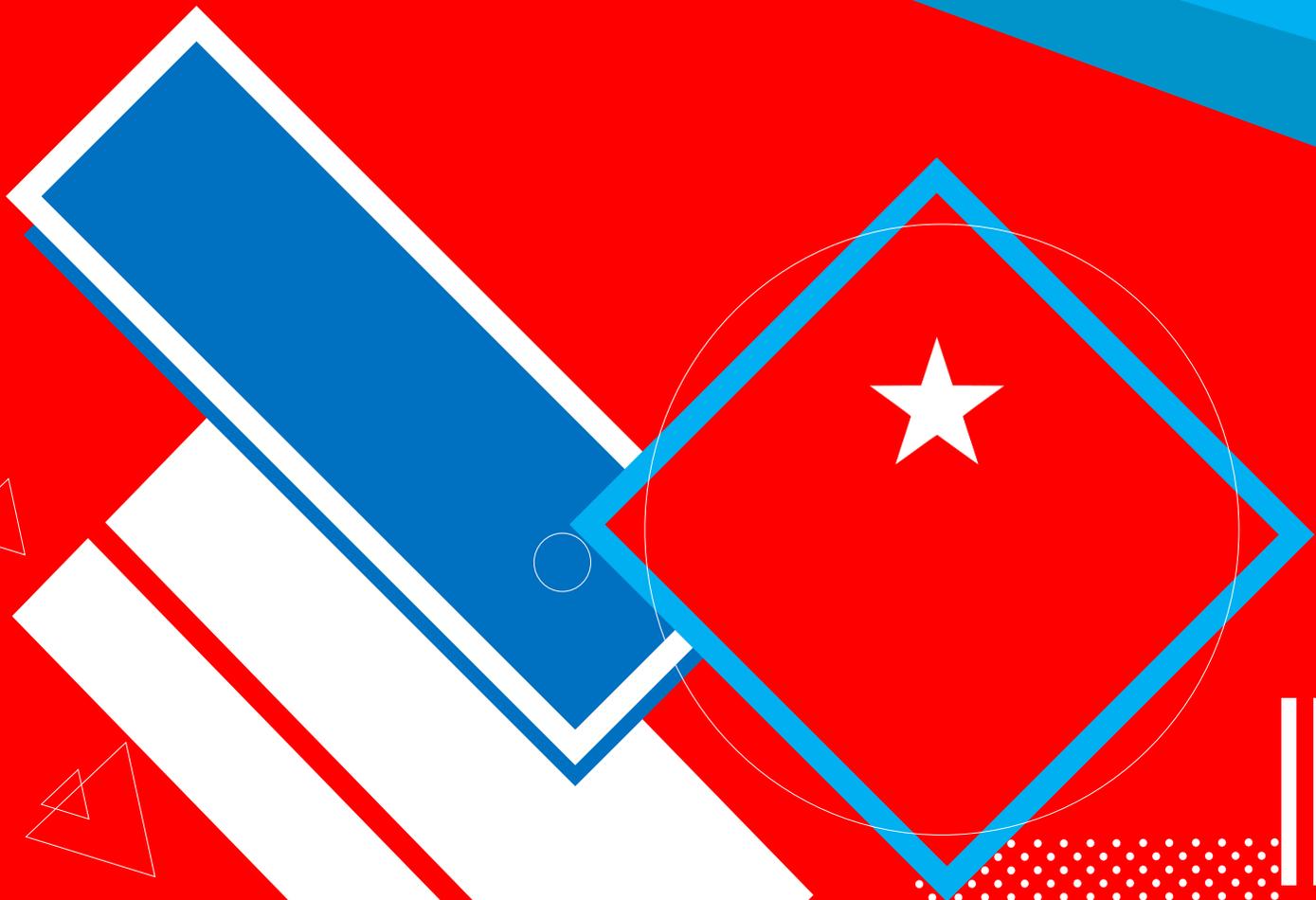
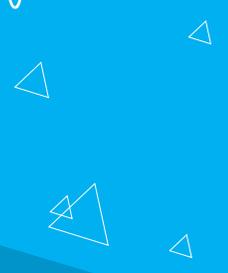
Aware that no country is exempt of challenges in this field, Cuba will continue strengthening its laws, institutions, strategies and public policies directed to improve even more its record on the promotion and protection of all human rights for all, as part of the process of updating its model for social and economic development.

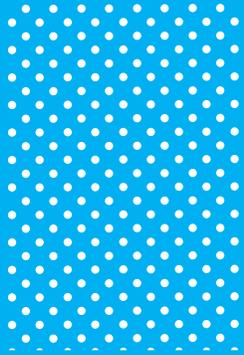




# PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

1959-2020



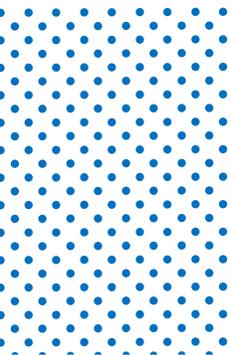


In Cuba, the rights of children and adolescents constitute a priority. UNICEF has highlighted the country's achievements in the care for the children, in particular the full access to culture, education and health.

The principle of the best interest of the child is duly embodied in the national legislation, and constitutes a key principle in the administrative, educational, family, legal and judicial areas.

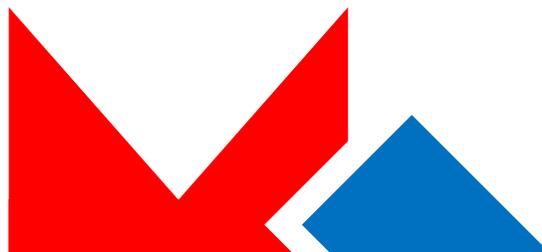
The achievements in children's health are tangible, and they have been possible thanks to the existence of a universal and free healthcare coverage, in which prevention and care at the community level play a critical role.





In 2019, infant mortality rate was 5.0 per one thousand live births, and it remained at that same rate or below that rate for the twelfth consecutive year. Mortality rate for children under five years is 6.6 per 1,000 live births and the survival rate at that age is 99.3%. 99.9% of births take place at health institutions.

In 30 years, only 49 children have been born to HIV-positive mothers. Between 1985 and 2015, only 85 cases of children under the age of 19 have been diagnosed with HIV. By the end of 2015, HIV prevalence in this group was 0,01%.

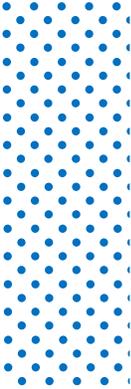




In 2015, the WHO certified Cuba as the first country to eliminate the mother-to-child transmission of HIV and congenital syphilis. The indicators validating this certification are still met, therefore in June 2019 the WHO ratified these achievements for the third time in the period 2015-2019.

The right to education, which has constitutional status, is ensured by the extensive and free system of schools, semi-boarding schools, boarding schools and scholarships at all types and levels of education; and by the additional free provision of school materials. The Early Childhood Education System covers the period from birth up to 6 years of age. Educational care in this first stage allows addressing the needs of 99.2% of the child population.





The literacy rate of the population between 10 and 49 years of age is 99.8%. Primary education covers the entire country. Out of the 6,837 existing primary schools, 69.5% are in rural areas. Children and adolescents between the ages of 11 and 15 are cared for at the junior high schools. 379,829 students are enrolled in 1,010 institutions and the continuity of studies for all of them, according to their results, has been ensured. One hundred percent of children with special educational needs receive this type of attention.

The abuse or neglect of children or adolescents by parents or legal guardians is not a problem of marked incidence in the country.





Corporal punishment is banned by law or by lower-ranking rules, neither in the family or school environments, and it is not tolerated by society. There is a severe criminal procedure of law to protect the child or adolescent against any act that threatens his or her normal development and integrity.

The regulatory framework in force provides the necessary guarantees to avoid child, early and forced marriage. The prohibition of child labor is one of the fundamental principles governing labor law. As a general rule, there are no children under the age of 17 incorporated into the labor market.





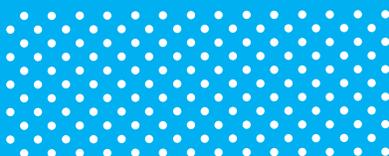
Cuba is not a country of destination, transit or source of trafficking in persons, particularly child sexual abuse, or where criminal organizations linked to these crimes are based.



# GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

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- 1959 - 2020 •
  - CUBA •
- 





In Cuba, the leadership, empowerment, and full participation of women on equal footing with men is a reality. The Cuban legal system enshrines the principles of full equality between men and women.



The presence of women in leadership positions has experienced a sustained 50% growth. Cuba ranks second in the world regarding the number of women in Parliament. Women make up 53.22% of our Parliament, and hold two of the three top positions in this body; and they make up 47.8% of the Council of State. They account for 78% of prosecuting attorneys, 77.5% of professional judges and 66% of the Supreme Court judges.





In the state's public sector, women make up to 49% of the workforce. Cuban laws protect women's right to decent employment and to non-discrimination as it relates to work and remuneration.

Women receive equal pay as men for work of equal value. ▶▶▶



Women account for more than 60% of higher education graduates; and comprise 53% of those working in the field of science and 48% of scientists and researchers. They also account for the 71.2% in the health sector.



Nevertheless, the country continues to work to further advance in the guarantees for full gender equality and women's empowerment in all areas of the political, economic and social life. ▶▶▶





RIGHT TO EQUALITY AND THE FIGHT AGAINST  
RACIAL DISCRIMINATION.



. 1959-2020 .

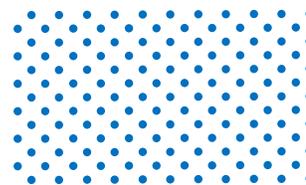




Cuba is a country that is honored to have Indo-American, European, African and Asian blood. The vast majority of our population is of mixed race, as mixed are our customs and traditions, popular religiosity, art expressions, traditional folk culture and idiosyncrasy. This mixture determines that we are a mono-ethnic, inclusive and mixed-race nation; and constitutes a stronghold of our identity as a nation.

---

The new Constitution of the Republic ratified and strengthened the recognition and protection of the right to equality, as well as the prohibition of discrimination. All persons are equal before the law, entitled to receive the same protection and treatment from the authorities and enjoy the same rights, freedoms and opportunities, without any discrimination whatsoever, which is banned and punished by law. ▶▶





There is no institutional or structural racial discrimination. Nor is it a widespread or common phenomenon in the country. The advocacy of hatred, the promotion of intolerance and supremacist ideas based on national, religious or ethnic origin, and xenophobia are alien to the political, social and economic life of the country.

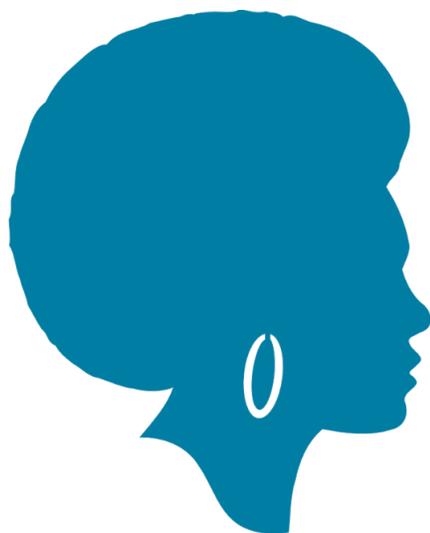


There is no discrimination in the access to the leading State and Government positions. The 2012 census, which used the self-identification method, revealed that 35.9% of the Cuban population considered themselves to be non-white, i.e., blacks (9.3%) or mulattoes (26.6%). At the same time, they account for 41% of the National Assembly of the People's Power whose President, as well as the Vice President of the Republic, the President of the People's Supreme Court, the Attorney General of the Republic and the Minister of Justice are people of black or mixed skin.



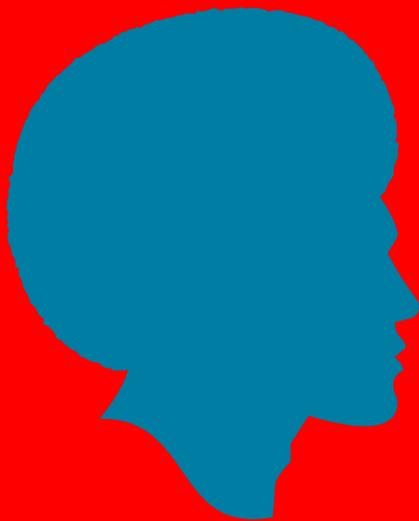


Nevertheless, despite the tremendous progress that has been made in the guarantees for the exercise of the right to equality and non-discrimination, racial prejudices survive in the behavior and expressions of some people.



In November 2019, the National Program against Racism and Racial Discrimination was established to fight and permanently erase the remnants of racism, racial prejudices and racial discrimination that still linger on. This program has been designed as a Governmental Program and a Governmental Commission has been created, headed by the President of the Republic.





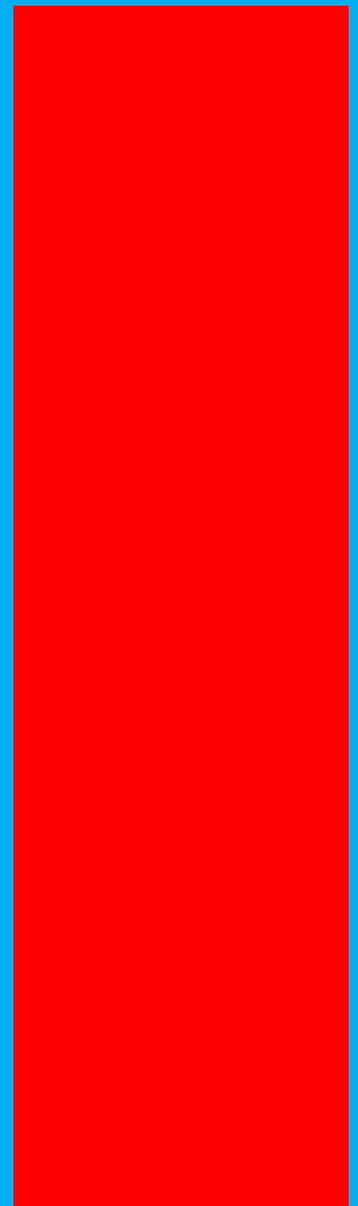
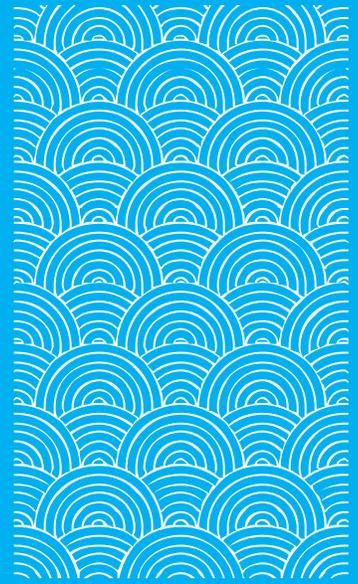
Its objectives include identifying the causes that encourage racial discrimination practices; diagnosing the possible actions to be undertaken by territory, locality, branch of the economy and society; spreading the historical and cultural legacy of Africa, of our native peoples and of other non-white peoples as part of Cuba's cultural diversity; and fostering organized public debate on racial issues within the political, mass and social organizations, as well as their presence in the media..



# FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND WORSHIP.



• 1959-2020 •  
• CUBA •





Cuba is a secular state, which recognizes, respects and guarantees freedom of religion. Religious institutions and fraternal associations are separate from the State; and all have the same rights and duties. The various beliefs and religions enjoy equal treatment. Discrimination on religious grounds is banned. Everyone has the right to profess or not any religious beliefs, to change them and to practice the religion of their choice, with due respect for the others.

The way in which the freedom of religion is recognized, protected and enjoyed is enshrined by law, and stands in accordance with the obligations of the Cuban State arising from the international instruments to which it is a party and the international standards on this matter. There are 1850 religious organizations and institutions and fraternal associations, whose membership bring together 1.5 million people. In recent years, more than 500 new organizations have been legally recognized.

All religious institutions and organizations and fraternal associations carry out, with total independence and autonomy, their social activities, assume the training of their members, the appointment of their leaders, and their movements in and out of the country.

These institutions carry out activities of a social nature and interact with believers and non-believers: they manage nursing homes and senior day care centers, with the support of the State; they implement projects for the benefit of persons with disabilities; they produce and distribute food; they provide spiritual care for the prison population and support disaster victims, among other activities of tremendous social impact.





WORKERS' RIGHTS.

Cuba is a founding member of the ILO, and has played an active role in the works of the organization, in support of the international labor and trade union movement and the protection of workers' rights. Cuba is a party to the 8 conventions considered to be fundamental within the framework of the ILO.



The new Constitution strengthened the recognition and legal protection of the rights of all workers. All persons, without any discrimination whatsoever, have the right to work and to obtain a decent job; and they receive equal pay for equal work. Workers have the right to rest, to the 8-hour workday, to weekly rest and to annual paid vacation; as well as to social security.



The Labor Code (2013) ratified the protection of trade union freedoms, including the freedom to voluntarily associate and form trade union organizations, and collective bargaining. The trade union organizations that the Worker's Central Union of Cuba groups together have an autonomous character. Its members approve their own statutes and regulations, discuss and reach agreements democratically, and elect or revoke their leaders. The national trade unions are comprised of more than 3 million members, and nearly 90% of Cuban workers are unionized.

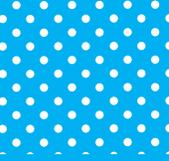


The trade unions carry out their duties without interference by the authorities. The leaders of the trade union organizations have the necessary guarantees for the exercise of their mandates. Employers cannot transfer them, punish them, affect their working conditions, or terminate their working relationship as a result of the performance of their trade union duties.



We have continued to promote the access of people with disabilities to work, taking into account their own choice, their level of training and the demands of the economy. Full employment, receiving equal pay for equal work, training and development, and equal opportunities to get a job without discrimination are principles of the Cuban labor practice which do not exclude people with disabilities.





# RIGHT TO HEALTH AND MEDICAL COOPERATION.



• 1959-2020 •

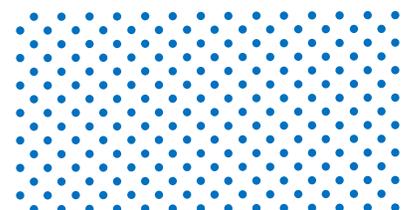




In Cuba, public health is a right of all persons, and it is the responsibility of the State to ensure access to free and quality services for the treatment, care and recovery of all individuals. To fulfill this constitutional mandate, Cuba has a health system at all levels, which is universal, free and accessible to the population throughout the national territory.



This system has enabled Cuba to have very positive indicators. Life expectancy is 78.45 years (76.5 for men and 80.45 for women). 14 infectious diseases have been eradicated, another 9 are no longer health issues (with rates lower than 0.1 per 100,000 inhabitants) and 29 communicable diseases are controlled.





Cuba has 97,202 doctors, so there is one doctor for every 116 inhabitants. The country has 19,825 dentists, one for every 556 inhabitants.

There are 150 hospitals in the country, 110 intensive care units, 120 municipal critical care unit areas, 449 outpatient clinics, 111 dental clinics, 132 maternity waiting homes, 12 research institutes, 680 medical libraries, 155 nursing homes, 295 senior day care centers, 52 geriatric services and 30 psychopedagogical medical centers.



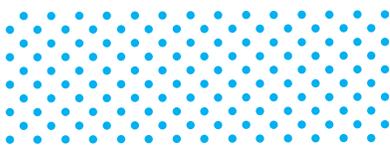
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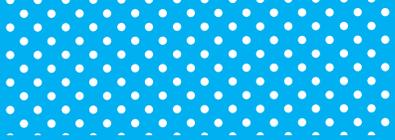
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Fourteen people per 100 inhabitants are admitted in hospitals, and there are 5.5 beds per 1000 inhabitants. 20% of hospitals are equipped with 400 or more beds, between 100 and 399 beds are available in 62.7% of hospitals, and 17.3% are equipped with less than 100 beds.

In 2019, 12.2 doctor's appointments per inhabitants were offered; and for the ninth consecutive year, more than one million surgeries were performed. Outpatient surgeries account for 56.6% of the total major surgeries.

Health personnel are trained at 13 universities and 29 schools of medical sciences, four schools of dentistry, one nursing school, one health technology school, three schools of health technology and nursing, 12 branch schools of medical sciences, the Latin American School of Medicine and the National School of Public Health.





In order to attain these achievements, Cuba has faced the impact of the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States government for 6 decades and which has been intensified in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, between April 2018 and March 2019, the damage caused by the blockade to the health sector amounted to more than \$104 million (\$6 million more than the previous year). The accumulated impact of the blockade on this sector amounts to over 2.9 billion dollars.

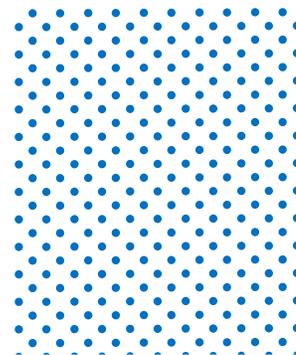


Based on its profoundly humanistic vocation, Cuba upholds its international medical cooperation programs as a priority. These programs are a legitimate expression of South-South cooperation, and have allowed Cuba to contribute to the promotion and protection of the right to health of millions of human beings around the world.

Since the beginning of the Cuban medical cooperation in 1963 and until April 2020, our country's expertise in the health sector has been placed at the service of 87 countries and territories. In 57 years of medical cooperation, Cuban health professionals have treated over 1.949 billion cases (more than 556 million on the ground); and have performed over 14 million surgical procedures, more than 4 million childbirths and vaccinated over 14.7 million people.

In light of the impact of COVID-19, Cuba has sent 52 brigades of the "Henry Reeve International Contingent of Doctors Specialized in Disaster Situations and Serious Epidemics" to 39 countries and territories, to help fight the pandemic. Forty-three are presently active, in 33 countries and territories.





**CUBA'S COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS MACHINERY.**



Cuba has maintained a high commitment to the promotion and protection of all human rights for all, as well as to the United Nations human rights mechanisms that are implemented on objective and non-discriminatory grounds.

Cuba was elected a founding member of the United Nations Human Rights Council for the period 2006–2009. The country has also been a member of the body for the periods 2009–2012, 2014–2016 and 2017–2019.

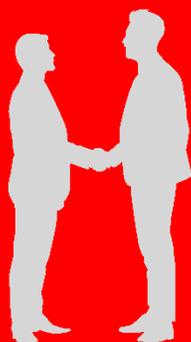
The country has continued to fulfill its international commitments and obligations undertaken under international human rights treaties and is a State party to 44 international instruments on human rights.



A positive dialogue has been consolidated with the bodies established under international human rights treaties. The country has made great efforts to honor its commitments in terms of the preparation and submission of reports to those bodies. Cuba presented its initial report to the Committee on Enforced Disappearances in 2017; its periodic report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in 2018; and its initial report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2019. In 2021, it is due to submit its periodic reports to the Committee against Torture and the Committee on the Rights of the Child.



In 2018, Cuba submitted its report for the third time to the Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review mechanism. On that occasion, it showed its progress in implementing the recommendations accepted in the previous cycle of that mechanism and upheld, in a respectful dialogue, with strict adherence to the principles of objectivity, impartiality and non-selectivity, the respect for the self-determination of each people to decide its own political, economic, social and cultural system and its development model, as the essential foundation for international cooperation in the field of human rights.



Cuba was one of the first countries to receive a visit from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, barely a year after this office was established. It has also received visits from several thematic special procedures. In 2017, the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and the Independent Expert on human rights and international solidarity visited the country. Both were fruitful visits.

As part of its policy of cooperation with the human rights mechanisms, the country systematically provides the necessary information to meet the requests for information from the special procedures of the Human Rights Council.

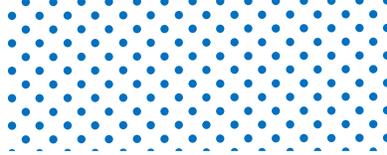
In its relationship with the United Nations human rights machinery, Cuba will continue to uphold the need to preserve the principles of objectivity, non-selectivity, and universality in addressing human rights, and to privilege international cooperation and respectful dialogue.





PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN THE CONDUCT OF  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND DECISION-MAKING  
PROCESSES.





The most powerful example of how the Cuban democracy works, and how the people participate in public affairs, was the process of consultation, approval and ratification of the new Constitution of the Republic, in which 8,945,521 people participated (out of a population of a little over 11 million inhabitants), and 133,681 meetings were held to discuss the draft, in which the people made 1,706,872 statements and put forward 783,174 proposals on the text.



As a result of this consultation, 760 changes were introduced to the text under examination. Almost 60 percent of the total number of articles was modified based on the opinions of the population, before its approval by the National Assembly of the People's Power.

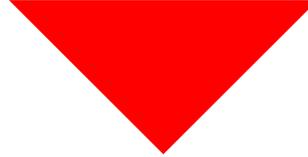


After the Constitution was approved, the text was submitted to a popular referendum for ratification on February 24, 2019. The new Constitution was ratified by the favorable vote of 86.85 percent of voters, which shows that the overwhelming majority of the Cuban people support the political, economic and social system enshrined in it.



VOLUNTARY PLEDGES AND COMMITMENTS  
SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH  
RESOLUTION 60/251 OF THE GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY.





Cuba attaches the highest importance to international cooperation for the promotion and protection of all human rights for all within the framework of the United Nations.

Cuba reaffirms its willingness to continue to work towards the achievement of the common goal of the enjoyment of all human rights by all individuals and peoples of the world, based on the respect for the Charter of the United Nations, the internationally agreed human rights instruments and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.

Cuba is firmly committed to upholding the effective realization of the right to development, the rights to education and health, the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other related forms of intolerance, and to ensuring full respect for the principles of universality, indivisibility, objectivity, non-politicization and non-selectivity in the strengthening of cooperation on human rights issues.



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Cuba will continue to contribute to the consolidation of a cooperative approach and constructive dialogue in the works of the United Nations human rights machinery, as well as to prevent the entronement of political manipulation in its works, which plunged into discredit and derailed the Commission on Human Rights.

Cuba will continue to promote its traditional initiatives on such important issues as the right to food and the promotion of cultural rights as indispensable requirements for the enjoyment of all human rights. Cuba will also continue to work for the progressive development of the third-generation human rights and, in particular, the right to international solidarity.

Cuba is aware of the challenges it faces in terms of human rights, and is cognizant that no country has a perfect record. We are not a perfect society, but we are firmly committed to building an increasingly fairer society, with the well-being of human beings and justice as the backbone.





CUBA, MEMBER STATE  
TO THE HUMAN  
RIGHTS COUNCIL.

2021-2023

