



**中 国 人 权 研 究 会**  
**China Society for Human Rights Studies**  
**NGO in consultative status with ECOSOC of the United Nations**

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The China Society for Human Rights Studies (CSHRS) is the largest national non-governmental organization in the field of human rights in China. It is a member of the United Nations Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (CONGO), which enjoys a special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It is included in the World Directory of Human Rights Research and Training Institutions compiled by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

The activities and tasks of the CSHRS are: studying the theories, history, and status of human rights in China and foreign countries; popularizing and publicizing human rights knowledge; engaging in international exchanges and cooperation; and promoting healthy development of human rights causes in China and the world as a whole. Since its establishment, the CSHRS has held many seminars and conducted researches on human rights, and has translated, edited and published a series of books on human rights. The CSHRS endeavors to popularize human rights knowledge in an effort to raise the awareness of the importance of human rights throughout society, and accelerates to establishment of human right education and training bases and popularizes human rights education. It also actively participates in international exchanges and cooperation in the field of human rights. It has held ten large multilateral international conferences named “Beijing forum on human rights”, and sent delegates to human rights conferences and other relevant activities, such bilateral international human rights conference held by the United Nations and other international organizations.

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**The Fourth Cycle Universal Periodic Review (UPR)**  
**of**  
**The Republic of Cuba**  
**Submitted by**

## **China Society for Human Rights Studies**

1. As the largest academic institution on human rights studies in China and a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), China Society for Human Rights Studies (CSHRS) has always been committed to human rights research, dissemination of human rights knowledge, and international exchanges and cooperation on human rights since its inception. In the present report, the CSHRS, as a stakeholder, reviewed the protection and guarantee of human rights in Cuba. Overall, we believe that Cuba has exercised its right to self-determination in accordance with its national conditions and explored a development path of human rights in line with the need of its people; that it has respected and safeguarded the citizens' political, economic, social and cultural rights; and that it has made great efforts and significant progress in safeguarding the right to life and health, the right to democracy, the right to education, the rights of vulnerable groups, and the right to social security and in participating in global governance of human rights.

### **Safeguarding the right to life and health**

2. It is noted that, in order to safeguard the right to life and health, Cuba has established a healthcare system that covers 99% of the population, achieving universal coverage of healthcare services in principle. The national healthcare system of Cuba has 486,900 employees, among which 101,876 are medical doctors. The physician density of Cuba is 9.2 medical doctors per 100 residents, ranking among the highest in the world.

3. As of the end of 2022, the neonatal mortality rate was

7.5‰ with 39 reported deaths less than that of 2021. In the past seven years, the rate of mother-to-child transmission of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) has not exceeded 2%.

4. Cuba protects children from 13 diseases through 11 vaccines, 8 of which are produced domestically. The transmission of poliomyelitis, diphtheria, neonatal tetanus, pertussis, rubella and epidemic parotitis has been interrupted. In 2017, the average life expectancy in Cuba exceeded 78 years.

5. Cuba was the first country in Latin America to develop a vaccine successfully after the COVID-19 outbreak. By January 2023, over 42 million doses of the national vaccine had been administered accumulatively in Cuba and over 99% confirmed patients recovered from COVID-19. At the same time, Cuba was the first country in the world to vaccinate children under two years against COVID-19.

### **Safeguarding the right to democracy**

6. It is noted that Cuba has consistently improved the power system of the people, developed and consolidated a democratic system that is based on its own national conditions and reflects its values, and promoted the full enjoyment of the rights to participate in the political affairs of the country.

7. In 2019, Cuba held a referendum on adopting the *Draft Constitution of the Republic of Cuba* through a democratic and transparent process. The total number of voters over the age of 16 in the country was 8,705,723, among which 7,848,343 voted; the turnout was over 90%. The affirmative vote accounted for 78% of eligible voters and 87% of actual voters.

8. In 2022, the *Draft Family Code of the Republic of Cuba*

was submitted for a universal consultation with the people, in which more than 6,480,000 Cuban citizens participated and 48% provisions of the Code was revised. In the referendum, 6,269,427 people or 74% of eligible voters voted and 67% of them voted for the Draft. Cuba was the first country in the world to submit a code of such kind to a referendum.

### **Safeguarding the right to education**

9. It is noted that over the years, the Cuban government has vigorously promoted universal free education. It has promoted social equity and improved the overall quality of the population by implementing education projects that benefit the people, guaranteeing equity in education and eliminating illiteracy. Cuba has provided social services far exceeding the internationally recognized standards for basic social services to safeguard the right to education and improve national literacy rate.

10. In 2019, the total population of Cuba was 11.3 million, of which 77% was urban residents. The expected and the average years of schooling were 14.4 and 11.8 respectively. The literacy rate of the population over the age of 15 was 99.8%.

### **Safeguarding the rights of vulnerable groups**

11. It is noted that Cuba has made great efforts to guarantee the rights of vulnerable groups. The protection of such rights has been enhanced by elevating the status of women, clarifying domestic responsibilities and improving the level of protection of the rights of senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

12. The *Family Code of the Republic of Cuba* highlights the idea of human rights protection. It takes into account the

right of women to a balanced use of their time. Provisions are added that children are entitled to the right of growing up in an environment without violence and to be free from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect or exploitation. The *Family Code* provides explicitly that a family has the primary responsibility to ensure their children and adolescents fully enjoy and effectively exercise their rights.

13. By the end of 2020, Cuba had 157 nursing homes with 12,561 beds and 300 Grandparents' Houses with 10,258 beds. In addition, Cuba has updated its national strategy for Alzheimer's disease and provided memory counselling in psychiatric institutions and long-term inpatient services in 45 cities.

14. There are 355 special schools in Cuba, with 33,975 persons with disabilities enrolled in the 2017/18 school year. At the same time, to ensure better participation and integration of persons with disabilities into society, 1,978 formal education institutions of all levels in Cuba provide educational opportunities for 11,037 persons with disabilities.

### **Safeguarding rights to social security**

15. It is noted that in terms of social security, in the face of the United States economic embargo of more than 60 years and the COVID-19 outbreak, Cuba has been actively improving its social security system to guarantee employment and livelihoods and stabilize domestic production and life.

16. Cuba protects the rights of its nearly 1.7 million retirees and pensioners. In 2021, social security expenditure of Cuba was 32,802,451,846 pesos; 202,527 families and 404,815 beneficiaries enjoy social security in terms of cash benefits, services and resources.

17. Following the COVID-19 outbreak, the Cuban government introduced a series of measures to stabilize the economy and respond to the pandemic, including prioritizing the supply of food, fuel, fertilizer, medicines and other products, promoting the processing and sale of related products through tax incentives, and allowing businesses greater flexibility in employment, which led to gradual stabilization of domestic production and life.

18. In the first half of 2022, Cuba had 7.1 million mobile phone subscribers. 5.5 million people accessed the Internet via mobile phones. More than 64% of Cuban citizens had varied access to the Internet. 227,300 households could access and express their views on the Internet through the Nauta Hogar service.

### **Active participation in global governance of human rights**

19. It is noted that, in order to promote the cause of human rights, Cuba has actively participated in global governance of human rights by acting in strict compliance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and engaging in worldwide cooperation on human rights.

20. Cuba is a party to 44 of 61 international human rights instruments, with 72.13% of ratification rate, making it one of the United Nations Member States with the largest number of ratifications of such instruments.

21. For more than 60 years, Cuba has maintained its position against the politicization of human rights and attached great importance to international cooperation for the promotion and protection of human rights in the face of the unjust, cruel

and inhumane sanctions imposed by the United States. Since 2011, Cuba has constantly participated in the consideration of periodic reports of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Committee against Torture, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other committees. Following the COVID-19 outbreak, Cuba sent 4,700 experts to 42 countries to support the response to the pandemic.

### **Recommendations**

22. We commend the efforts and achievements made by the Cuban government in safeguarding human rights. However, it should be noted that there is still room for improvement in terms of improving people's lives, promoting an adequate standard of living, and raising the level of protection of the rights to participate in cultural life and to benefit from scientific progress and its application.

23. We recommend that, in order to improve people's lives, the Cuban government make greater efforts to raise productivity, develop the local economy, improve economic efficiency, promote foreign investment, strengthen Cuba's comprehensive national power, resist foreign interference, sabotage and economic sanctions, so that the people can truly see the benefits, and that the social coherence and stability can be enhanced.

24. We recommend that, in order to promote an adequate standard of living, the Cuban government, while continuing supporting the access to universal and free public services, caring for the vulnerable groups, and ensuring the right to life and health and the right to social security, make greater efforts

to raise people's income, improve their living conditions and safeguard every individual's right to an adequate standard of living.

25. We recommend that, in order to improve citizens' participation in cultural life, the Cuban government invest more for a higher level of education and increased accessibility of cultural resources, and that it should bring cultural life to the next level by implementing cultural projects that benefit the people, promoting equalization of public cultural resources, and increasing protection of the cultural rights of vulnerable groups.

26. We recommend that, in order to protect the right to benefit from scientific progress and its application, the Cuban government continue expanding the investment in the network infrastructure, so that more Cubans can have access to the Internet, and that it should tap into the advantage of 4G and even 5G networks to promote distance education, telemedicine and e-commerce, so that the benefits from scientific progress and its application can be shared by the Cuban people.