

RESUMEN

LATINOAMERICANO AND THE THIRD WORLD

Resumen Latinoamericano in English – Individual UPR submission – Cuba - April 2023

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Purpose:

The mission of Resumen Latinoamericano in English is to bring news and analysis from Latin America and the Caribbean, with a Cuban emphasis, written by academics, journalists, writers, intellectuals and advocates of sovereignty living and working in the region to a North American audience. The goal is to bring voices to encourage critical thinking to counter prevailing misconceptions and false news so prevalent in the United States when it comes to Cuba.

Resumen Latinoamericano in the US – Individual UPR submission – Cuba May 2023

Introduction

1. The following stakeholder submission is being made in support of Cuba to the United Nations Human Rights Commission Universal Periodic Review (UNHRC-UPR) by Resumen Latinoamericano in English, which is part of an independent international multi-dimensional media agency with bureaus throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. This submission is based on our collective study and witness of life and society on the island and the advancements Cuba has made in human rights against all odds.
2. All considerations and observations made here by Resumen Latinoamericano are presented in the context of Cuba living under an unrelenting US blockade that has remained in place for 61 years. While the intensity of this overarching unilateral punishment, from its hostile neighbor 90 miles away, has eased at times it is currently at its most severe with the addition of 243 new sanctions during the Trump Administration that continues under the Biden Administration, which has also added Cuba to the list of States Sponsor of Terrorism. What has changed is not Cuba's socialist project as a constant vehicle to human improvement but a desperation of the US to maintain its grip over Latin America and Cuba's influence in promoting regional unity and mutually beneficial development between nations.

Nation's Right of Self - Determination

3. An essential part of the foundation of the UN charter is a nation's right to self-determination and in this sense Cuba embarked upon a socialist direction with its revolution in 1959 that has endured until now. Despite the open hostility and the promotion of a policy of regime change Cuba has made remarkable advancements in health, education and welfare. It should be noted that in the prior colonial period under the hegemony of the US, from the Platt amendment in 1903 to the overthrow of the 7 year Batista dictatorship in 1959, that murdered 20,000 Cubans, illiteracy and poverty were rampant. A 1950 study by the World Bank, for example, found that 60 percent of rural residents and 40 percent of urban residents were undernourished; 40 percent lacked regular, full-time employment; and 40 percent had never attended school. Enter the Revolution that quickly came up with a collaborative literacy campaign that brought the human right to be able to read and write to 96% of the population in around a year.
- 2.
4. The concept and belief in the Right of Self-Determination is not lost on the vast majority of members of the United Nations when it comes to Cuba. Nothing could illustrate this more than the yearly vote in the UN General Assembly against the US's unilateral blockade of the island. As it has been for the past 30 years the overwhelming number of countries stand up

and vote against the blockade; in 2022 it was 185 – 2. This is not a popularity contest but rather an international recognition that Cuba has the right to forge their own social system and it is also a reflection of respect that countries have towards Cuba and the way it interacts with the world. Cuba doesn't have to twist arms behind closed doors to make this happen. The question should be, if Cuba really was a violator of human rights or a country that supports terrorism would the General Assembly vote go this way year after year?

The Cuban Family Code of 2022 – A Fundamental Exercise in Participatory Democracy

5. The constant refrain from Cuba's detractors often comes down to Cuba's a "dictatorship" and the people of Cuba cannot express themselves freely. Firstly, over the years of our coverage it has been the experience of all of the correspondents of Resumen Latinoamericano, working in Cuba, that the people of the island have educated opinions on just about every topic and they are not afraid to speak up and defend those opinions, including their disagreements on conditions and decisions of the government. Unlike representatives in capitalist democracies who come from heavily funded corporate parties and are not chosen as candidates from the electorate, in Cuba all candidates for office are chosen from the communities they come from by the people who live and work there. Other candidates come from the mass organizations like the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) or the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC) as just two examples.
6. On September 25, 2022 the Cuban people passed into law what is arguably the most progressive and enlightened Family Codes in the world paving the way for a massive expansion of human rights to include the LGBTQ, the elderly, disabled people, as well as women and children. In one fell swoop Cuba legalized same-sex marriage, defined and upheld the rights of children, the disabled, caregivers, the elderly, and redefined "family" along ties of affinity rather than blood. This opens the concept of "family" to include non-traditional forms of familial relations, which exist outside the model of the heterosexual nuclear family. The Cuban people did not merely vote for the new code, they had a key role through a popular consultation process to create it.

3.

7. The process of the sweeping Family Code becoming law began after it was submitted by the National Assembly of People's Power, the highest legislative body, in the country, in early February 2022 and from there it went to all the communities and mass organizations in the country for popular consultation and discussion. Input and suggestions came in from all over the country and the Family Code went back to the National Assembly to make adjustments to include additions and changes and then it was resubmitted to the

population for further review and discussion. Despite an organized opposition to the Family Code from outside of Cuba and by religious sectors of society on the island it was finally passed by 66.87% of the voters.

8. The Family Code and the process it went through demonstrates how Cuba does not rest on its revolutionary past but rather continues to be a dynamic system of seeking social improvement and human rights for all expressions and manifestations of society.

Conclusion

9. Resumen Latinoamericano in English as a frequent and consistent observer of Cuban society attests that this small country that faces unwarranted hostility from its Northern neighbor has not just maintained its support for Human Rights, in the highest degree, but since its last UN Human Rights Commission Universal Periodic Review in 2017 has continued to raise the bar in respect of the welfare and inclusion of its entire population.