

UPR submission – Julio Fonseca

Cuba, as a country which practices a participatory and inclusive democracy, strives to preserve all Human Rights for all Cuban citizens. Among the aspects that reinforce the protection and promotion of human rights is the reconfiguration of the equality clause and the principle of non-discrimination by incorporating new figures or categories that are vulnerable or susceptible to discrimination such as age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, ethnic origin, and territorial origin.

The protection of women is reinforced with equal rights in all areas in relation to men, and it ensures the exercise of their sexual and reproductive rights and protects them from gender violence in any of its manifestations.

New rights are introduced, such as: the right to access public information and to receive truthful, objective and timely information, the right to water, healthy and adequate food, adequate housing and a safe and healthy habitat.

Cuba has maintained extensive cooperation with the human rights mechanisms that are applied on universal and non-discriminatory bases, and it has ratified 44 international instruments on human rights.

Cuba has improved the country's legal and institutional framework which has been deepened to update the economic and social model, based on preserving and strengthening social justice and solidarity.

Cuba is a world referent for guaranteeing essential human rights such as health care, education and human development, placing the country at the same level of the so-called first world countries.

Conversely, the human rights of Cubans continue to be violated by the blockade imposed by the United States of America on the people of Cuba for more than sixty years. This system of sanctions and persecution of Cuba's transactions is in fact an economic war on the average Cuban, with the explicit goal of creating discontent and desperation. It violates International Law, the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and the rules of free trade.

The blockade not only violates the human rights of the Cuban people, but also the sovereign right of all countries in the world to relate to Cuba without fear of being punished due to its extraterritorial implementation.

The damage, deficiencies and suffering that the blockade policy has caused the Cuban people, a situation accentuated in times of COVID-19, have not prevented equal opportunities, the redistribution of wealth, or social justice.

Cuba was the only country that the Biden government did not exempt from unilateral sanctions during the COVID-19 pandemic, for humanitarian reasons. On the contrary, the US government

opportunistically intensified this aggressive policy against the country.

The United States of America should renounce its policy of aggression and punishment which prevents Cubans from enjoying a life of peace and prosperity.