



KIBRIS BARIŞ KONSEYI CYPRUS PEACE COUNCIL

Written submission on Cuba's Universal Periodic Review, **By Cyprus Peace Council**

1. The Cyprus Peace Council, a Non-Governmental Organization, was founded in 1949 and is one of the founding members of the World Peace Council, which was established in order to fight against the risk of a Third World War; even a nuclear war. The Cyprus Peace Council is a member of the Secretariat of the Word Peace Council.
2. For more than 74 years, the Cyprus Peace Council wrote history with mobilizations, signature-gathering campaigns, 8 Peace Marches and active participation in International Conferences, anti-imperialist events and Congresses on Peace.
3. The Cyprus Peace Council is acknowledged by the UN as a Non-Governmental Organization (N.G.O.) with participation rights in special international meetings organised by the UN. Cyprus Peace Council has bilateral relations with peace movements in several countries of the world. It develops its collective relations within the framework of the World Peace Council as well as the European Network for Peace and Human Rights, where our Movement maintains a position in the Coordinating Committee.
4. As Cyprus Peace Council we would like to contribute on the issue of Cuba's Universal Periodic Review. As a peace movement, we believe that living in conditions of peace, democracy and social justice is a fundamental component for the protection of human rights. Therefore, we feel strongly the need to add on this issue our own position based as well on our relation with UN but also based on our warm sincere interest and concern for Latin America where Peace and Human Rights have been severely violated during past decades but even now in some countries of this Continent.
5. Our written submission is based on our own first hand experiences from several times that we have visited Cuba for various reasons and purposes. Moreover, is based and on our continuous study and research of the Cuban example and in various contacts we had through the years with many Cubans inside and outside Cuba, people from a variety of social and political background.
6. Cuba is an independent and sovereign state of workers, organized with all and for the good of all, as a united and democratic Republic, for the enjoyment of political freedom, social justice, individual and collective well-being and human solidarity. The Cuban State recognizes and encourages mass and social organizations, which bring together different sectors of the population, represent their specific interests and involve them in the building, consolidation and defense of the society.



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7. The Cuban State recognizes and encourages mass and social organizations, which bring together different sectors of the population, represent their specific interests and involve them in the building, consolidation and defense of the society. The Law provides, as in most countries, the mechanisms and forms in which public participation becomes effective. This occurs on both daily and local issues, as well as on political processes with greater significance and scope, such as elections, popular consultations, among others. As examples, it is worth noting: the adoption of the Constitution in 1976 by a popular referendum on a “yes” vote of over 97% of the total number of voters; the participation of nearly 9 million people in more than 163,000 meetings held to discuss the Draft Guidelines of the Economic and Social Policy; and the discussion of the preliminary draft Labor Code with the participation of over 2,800,000 workers, in some 69,000 trade union assemblies. Since 2019, a comprehensive legislative update has taken place with the adoption of the new Constitution of the Republic, which has strengthened the treatment and protection of human rights. The new Magna Carta significantly expands the catalogue of rights and reaffirms the universal, indivisible and interdependent nature of all human rights.
8. We strongly believe that Cuba is a Nation that resists and develops under the most difficult conditions imposed by the strangling blockade imposed by US Administration for more than five decades. Within the conditions of the ongoing severe global economic crisis that has destroyed big western economies, to manage to maintain a standard of living in a country of Latin America that is under a multi decade blockade, is a triumph. As triumph was the overthrow of Dictatorship in the late 1950's. Furthermore, the economic amendments decided by Cuba and its people in 2011 have created the preconditions for elevating the quality of life for all Cubans and overcoming the difficulties from the ongoing global economic crisis and the unfair and hostile blockade against the Country.
9. The victory of the Cuban Revolution has eliminated racial, religious and gender discriminations and launched the level of security, welfare, health and education to such levels that surpassed many developed western Countries. Cuba's present scientific and technical potential is already yielding fruit. Worth mentioned is the fact that Cuba is an illiteracy free country and education is of high level, is public and completely free for all Cubans.
10. Cuba is striving to achieve the fullest enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all its citizens, despite that the Cuban people have faced the US blockade policy for more than 60 years, which constitutes a serious and systematic violation of their human rights. Also, Cuba has ratified 44 international human rights instruments out of the 61 internationally-recognized instruments.



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- 11.** The application of the U.S. economic, trade, and financial blockade for more than six decades constitutes a massive, flagrant and systematic violation of the human rights of the Cuban people. It violates international law, the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and the norms of free trade. The blockade violates not only 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. This economic siege of Cuba affects many US citizens and industries that are prevented from establishing a respectful and pleasant relationship with Cuban authorities and society. This policy has been significantly exacerbated in the last five years, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The damage, deprivation and suffering inflicted on the Cuban people by the blockade policy, a situation that has been exacerbated in the COVID-19 period, have not prevented equality of opportunity, redistribution of wealth and social justice. Cuba was the only country that the Biden administration did not exempt from unilateral sanctions on humanitarian grounds in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. On the contrary, the US government opportunistically tightened this aggressive policy against the country.
- 12.** Cuba not only protects the rights of its own people, but also provides cooperation to other peoples in many sectors, especially in the field of health and education. We would like to underline Cuba's diachronic great contribution to the under-developed countries in the fields of education and health, where thousands of Cuban doctors and teachers voluntarily have offered their priceless services to educate and to heal people. In the context of its international solidarity in the of medical cooperation for more than 59 years, Cuba has collaborated in 165 countries with more than 605,000 collaborators. This has benefited more than 2,000 million people around the world. Currently, Cuban doctors collaborate in 56 countries with more than 23,000 collaborators. Cuban doctors have performed millions of surgeries, vaccinations and births in Latin America, Africa, Asia and other parts of the world. The most recent examples were the Cuban missions in Haiti after the deadly earthquake, in West Africa when the deadly Ebola virus broke out, with Cuba sending the biggest mission of doctors and humanitarian aid from all over the world, receiving the congratulations of the World Health Organization itself. Especially, the midst of the complex international situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Cuba has sent 4,700 specialists to 42 countries to help in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. The practical recognition of Cuba's selfless solidarity in tackling the pandemic means the demand around the world for the termination of the illegal US blockade against Cuba should be strengthened.
- 13.** Coming from a country as Cyprus that suffers from foreign interventions and imperialist manipulations, we denounce the efforts of certain Countries to undermine a sovereign Country only because this Country has decided a different way of social and economic development. As a country that has the 37% of its land under Turkey, we denounce the illegal occupation of Guantanamo by USA. The military occupation threatens the security of the people of Guantanamo, diminishes their standard of living, depriving them from their lands and natural resources. In the same that we denounce the colonial leftover of British



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Bases that exist in Cyprus, we denounce also the US Military Base in Guantanamo, Cuba. Both are elements that undermine peace and stability in Cyprus, Cuba and in the broader regions around these two Countries.

14. We believe that the blockade imposed to Cuba aims to the economic exhaustion of the Country and only, thus standard of living for Cubans and Human Rights are threatened and violated not by the Cuban State but by those that chasing Cuba on the pretext of Human Rights violation. Moreover, the hostility and aggressiveness of USA and EU expressed with the sponsoring or encouraging of subversive acts against Cuba form a well-organized plan that literally disturbs national stability of the Country, and violates directly or indirectly the human right in the Country.
15. For all the above reasons we strongly support the case of Cuba in relation with the upcoming Universal Periodic Review.

Nicosia, April 5th 2023

For the Cyprus Peace Council,

**Charis Pashias
General Secretary**