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The AICT has had ECOSOC status since 1987. The December Twelfth Movement International Secretariat has had ECOSOC status since 1997. The AICT focuses on the exposure of torture in its various forms throughout the world. The December Twelfth Movement is particularly concerned with the struggles of People of African Descent throughout the African Diaspora.

We will briefly address two issues regarding Cuba: its history of national and international medical assistance and the deleterious effects of the U.S. blockade

Health

1. The quality of Cuba's free healthcare system remains undisputed. Cuban citizens receive better healthcare than do citizens of most "developed" countries. ⁱ These medical benefits have not been restricted to the residents of the island but are offered to and distributed internationally, particularly to countries which have suffered natural disasters or medical emergencies, e.g. the 2014 Ebola emergency in West Africa. ⁱⁱ
2. Cuba has achieved and maintained this level of healthcare, despite facing the obstacles created by the 60- year illegal U.S. blockade. Forced to rely on its own resources, Cuba has made extraordinary medical advances over the years. In the 1980s, it developed the world's first successful meningococcal B vaccination. ⁱⁱⁱ Since the COVID 19 pandemic, Cuba has on its own developed three vaccines to protect its population and distribute globally. ^{iv}
3. Since 1960 Cuba has trained tens of thousands of doctors from countries around the world (at the Latin American Medical School in Havana), including the U.S., for free with the proviso that they practice community and family medicine upon their return home. ^v

The Blockade and the State Terrorism Designation

4. Whatever achievements Cuba has made and whatever problems it has encountered must be evaluated from the context of the U.S.-imposed blockade. The cumulative effects of these decades-long sanctions pose significant obstacles to Cuba's economic and infrastructure development. The deleterious effects of the blockade are compounded by the problems presented by the U.S. unjustified designation of Cuba as a state sponsor of terrorism. ^{vi}

ENDNOTES

ⁱ <https://havana-guide.com/healthcare-in-cuba-is-it-really-that-good/>

ⁱⁱ Milne, Seumas, "Cuba's Extraordinary global medical record shames the U.S. blockade," The Guardian, 3 December 2014

ⁱⁱⁱ Burki, Talha, "Behind Cuba's Successful Pandemic Response," April, 2021, [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099\(21\)00159-6/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099(21)00159-6/fulltext)

^{iv} Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, "Cuba's COVID 19 vaccines success could serve as global model, A Report", 3 November, 2022, <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/hsph-in-the-news/cubas-covid-19-vaccine-success-could-serve-as-global-model-report/>

^v <https://medicc.org/ns/elam/>

^{vi} Beitsch, Rebecca, "Bill would block Biden from delisting Cuba as state sponsor of terrorism," 3/12/21, <https://thehill.com/policy/national-security/542994-bill-would-block-biden-from-lifting-cuba-from-state-sponsor-of/>