

Center *for* Democracy  
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**Devoted to changing U.S. policy toward the countries of the Americas by basing our relations on mutual respect, fostering dialogue with those governments and movements with which U.S. policy is at odds, and recognizing positive trends in democracy and governance.**

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September 27, 2012

Madam Navanethem Pillay  
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)  
Palais des Nations  
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Dear Madam Pillay,

The Center for Democracy in the Americas takes this opportunity to recognize the nation of Cuba for its significant contributions to global human rights through the implementation of its medical diplomacy program.

The Center for Democracy in the Americas (CDA), a non-profit organization based in Washington, DC has researched Cuba's medical diplomacy programs for several years. The practice of regularly sending professionally trained Cuban doctors to disadvantaged communities and to disaster zones is a laudable achievement. The offering of free, world-class healthcare education to students from these communities represents an investment in creating a sustainable vision to globally guarantee the right to healthcare for all.

We have seen firsthand the impact of Cuban doctors in El Salvador, where CDA performed a case study on the Cuban mission earlier this year. Cuba's long-standing medical cooperation with El Salvador contributed to the normalization of relations between the two countries in 2010. We also found that Cuban doctors were providing high-quality essential services to local communities that otherwise had no access to such care. In addition, Salvadoran doctors trained in Cuba have returned home to practice in their own communities in mainly marginalized rural areas. Nearly 400 young Salvadorans are currently studying medicine in Cuba.

Our organization has also studied Cuba's mission in Haiti. Cuba's mission in that country was present before the disastrous earthquake in January 2010. Following the earthquake, Cuba sent thousands of doctors to set up care centers and provide primary care to injured Haitians. Cuban doctors played a key role in recognizing, treating and controlling the subsequent cholera outbreak. Throughout this

process, Cuban healthcare professionals have worked with Haiti's government to rebuild the nation's public healthcare system for the long-term.

CDA has also on several occasions visited the Latin American Medical School (ELAM) in Havana, where our organization has had the opportunity to meet with international students, including several from the U.S., taking advantage of scholarships provided by Cuba's government.

Cuba, a small island nation, has taken on a significant role in providing medical diplomacy, healthcare services and training for at need populations in the developing world. Their medical diplomacy ensures the right to accessible healthcare for the in the communities where they work.

As such, we believe that Cuba should be recognized by this body for its exceptional role in globally promoting citizens' healthcare rights and cooperation.

Sincerely,



Sarah Stephens  
Executive Director  
Center for Democracy in the Americas