

“The Cuba-St. Kitts Nevis Friendship Association - UPR Submission –
CUBA - May 2013”

THE CUBA-ST. KITTS NEVIS FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION

- Founded 24th September 2009
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Objectives of the Association:

The Friendship Association recognizes the existence of friendly relations between Cuba and Saint Kitts and Nevis. It also aims to promote and to enrich the relations of friendship and solidarity between both countries through mutual cooperation, by means of cultural, educational, scientific, technical and social exchanges in general; and to recognize also the legal struggle of the Cuban people to defend his achievements and rights in the national and international spheres. Other objectives of the Association are to give platform to voice its concerns, to make contributions to matters of interest and to give support to the people of the Republic of Cuba as they struggle to create a more just, fairer and freer society, as well as to highlight the social and political achievements of this independent and sovereign nation.

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Basseterre, St. Kitts and Nevis, October 4th, 2012

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- 1) Prior to the Triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959, 70% (seventy percent) of its population were illiterate, lacked access to proper health care and housing, were marginalized, landless and without any hope and its economy in a neo-colonial status, controlled mostly by interests from the United States of America, although the country was supposed to be independent.
- 2) The Cuban people were able to attain their true independence along with full universal enjoyment of Human Rights for the very first time in their existence.
- 3) The people of Cuba will be most willing to defend a Revolution which has made it possible to enjoy civil, political, cultural, economic and social rights of everyone in the country, for no longer are they second class citizens of their country. All the Cubans are asking for is their rights to free determination, development and a peaceful environment; the promotion of a fair, democratic and equitable international order which respects the sovereignty and dignity of all countries and their peoples. This is all that the Cuban people crave.
- 4) Every year, from 2009 until 2012, they have continued the process of improving their Socialist system. The Cuba of 1959 is far different to the Cuba of today. This transformation has to take place in order to meet the requirements of the population, paving the way for a Socialist system which is fairer every day, more productive every day and which is tailored to the needs and advancement of its people and the country.
- 5) Every Administration in the United States since and after the Revolution, attempted to destroy the Revolution. They have landed mercenaries to destroy the assets of the country, not caring how many innocent civilians are killed in the process. The distribution of false information about Cuba, the economic and financial blockade have presented serious obstacles to the advancement of the people, thereby preventing them from enjoying full human rights and basic freedoms which include their right to peace, their right to self determination and the most elementary rights of the people.
- 6) The Cuban Government has always maintained a high degree of cooperation with the United Nations Human Rights procedures and its mechanisms of non-discrimination. In this sense Cuba is a State party to numerous international instruments that we will not describe in this submission as they are registered and well documented at the UN and the OHCHR.

- 7) From the first cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in 2009, Cuba has maintained that degree of cooperation and the process of adherence to international instruments linked to Human Rights observance and others related to UN bodies. The Cuban people and its Government have always adhered to the recommendations made at this Review. To mention only some examples in the last four years it ratified the International Convention for the Protection of Persons from Enforced Disappearance or ILO Recommendation concerning HIV and AIDS and the world of work.
- 8) The country and its people are willing to participate in frank and fruitful discussions, but the people and the country would have to be treated with respect and equality, for they are a Sovereign Nation. They should not be constantly bombarded by negative and hurtful propaganda, since the United Nations Charter guarantees them the right to pursue their own economic, cultural development which benefits the advancement of its people. No country, irregardless of its economic and military might should impose its economic system on another, for, if this were to continue unopposed, the United Nations and its Charter would become meaningless. If every country and its people were treated as equals, a new era of peace, progress and trade and business will be ushered in.
- 9) The persistent political and malicious slandering of the Cuban Revolution, its Government, its people, promoted by its big neighbour the United States of America, can be deemed to be interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign and independent nation, with the sole intent of overthrowing or destroying the many positive strides which are being enjoyed by the people. This is against the Charter of the United Nations. The Cuban Constitution recognizes the rights of all its citizens. The right to work, the right to have time off from work for recreation and the family, the right not to be arbitrarily prosecuted, the right of persons not to be forced to give evidence, the right to be represented in a Court of Law by an attorney, the right of Appeal, the right not to be executed but to serve instead a life sentence of 30 years. In this sense, since the last UPR report, in Cuba no death sentence has been passed by the courts; in April 2009 the Council of State commuted the death penalty and replaced it with a 30-year sentence or life imprisonment for any inmates having received the death sentence. Today in Cuba there is no longer anyone sentenced to the death penalty.

- 10) Cuba, over the last four years, with a view to always improve its efforts so that its citizens could have a broader enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all on the basis of equality, void of any forms of discrimination of any kind, to elevate the quality of life, has been implementing new measures, also legal and institutional, to improve its economy and social benefits of its population. The adopting of the Economic and Social Policy Guidelines in 2011, seeking to update the Cuban economic model, is one of them, the most important one.
- 11) Boys, girls, youths, senior citizens, the disabled, prison inmates, psychiatric patients, sexual orientation, have all been guaranteed freedom from discrimination.
- 12) How can a country which has maintained a high degree of cooperation and interaction with the United Nations Human Right procedures and mechanism of a Non Discriminatory nature, and Universal Application, be accused of Human Rights violations? How can a country which has demonstrated its willingness to discuss all subjects, all problems with all states, be condemned for Human Rights violations? All that is needed for some countries to do, is to dilute or abandon their hostility toward Cuba and treat it as the sovereign country it really is. It is only then that all countries will be able to sit as equal partners to discuss the issue of Human Rights.
- 13) No country which wants to violate the Human Rights of its people would give them access to free education from Kindergarten to University level, making Education a Right and not a privilege to be enjoyed by a few people. No country which wants to violate the Human Rights of its people would provide them with proper housing facilities. No country which wants to violate the Human Rights of its citizens will offer them free medical attention regardless of their illnesses. No country which is a Human Rights violator would ensure that non of its children, none of its disabled, non of its senior citizens, non of its prisoners go to sleep hungry. There are no persons in Cuba sleeping on the streets or searching the garbage bins looking for food. All are provided for by the State.
- 14) If you educate the citizens, you open their eyes to see and their minds to think and compare, to observe the good and the evil; to promote an environment of peace, brotherhood and cooperation. We should never allow the interests of a few persons who are in the employ of a foreign power, which is against the strides, the privileges, the enjoyment of the vast majority of the masses, be superseded by that selfish few over the majority.

15) In looking at the issue of Human Rights, a broad analysis of the whole inventory of human rights abuses, human rights violations, human rights successes be taken into account. We need to give high marks where they are due and Cuba deserves high marks. For years it has been subjected to a vicious campaign of misinformation, bitter accusations in order to discredit its performance in Human Rights. Which other country, developed and underdeveloped provides access to professional education, thereby advancing the human resources of many countries? There are countries which drain the Human Resources. Cuba builds, improves and train the Human Resources of countries; thereby contributing to their development and to the welfare of their peoples. We know of that experience because of the many professionals from St. Kitts and Nevis who have graduated in Cuba through the years in the fields of Public Health, Economy, Technology, Agriculture, Education, Child Education, Social Sciences, etc. This has still been happening in the last four years.

Basseterre, St. Kitts and Nevis, October 4th, 2012