

Cuba at the Defence of her Human Rights Records

Submitted by the Botswana-Cuba Friendship Group

Contribution in the face of Cuba's review in the framework of the Universal Periodic Review Mechanisms (The Council of Human Right) to be considered for review in February 2009.

The definition of Human Rights is often a very thorny issue in the global context. Depending on one's political point of view and how one views the global political system. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, New 7th Edition defines Human rights and I quote **“as one of the basic rights that everyone has to be treated fairly and not in a cruel way, especially by their governments”**

The United Nation's charter on Human rights further extends this concept to the right to educations, health, decent housing, and security among many others.

In other words every country have the right to self-determination and to run a system that best serves the her interest and that of her people and that is exactly what Cuba and the people have done for themselves over the years.

The Cuban revolution some 50 years ago, a revolution that has liberated the country and her people from the grips of the puppet United States backed Fulgencio Batista's regimen and has brought about freedom, liberty and the rights to decent and free education, free basic health care, security, portable water, housing and security to the people of Cuba. Notwithstanding these progressive developments, successive US Governments over the years have relentlessly directed policies, programmes and aggressive actions with the aim of annihilating the revolutionary process undertaken by the Cuban people. Never before has a foreign policy against a country been equipped with such a wide and sophisticated arsenal of aggressive measures at the political, economic, cultural, diplomatic, military, psychological and ideological levels such those being directed towards this tiny and determined Caribbean Island.

The only motive for this sustained and unjustifiable action by the US is for the simple reason that Cuba and the people have chosen a different system of self-determination from those of their powerful northern neighbours. Since when has self-determination become an international criminal offence?

The US over the years has done virtually everything mentionable and unmentionable act under the sun including mercenary invasion of the sovereign territory of Cuba, countless assassination attempts on the life of the former Cuban President Fidel Castro and biological warfare to organization of and support for the terrorist actions against the country, the keeping in force of the fierce economic, commercial and financial

blockade and even the shameful use of their own diplomats as common messengers to hand over money and privileges to citizens who, within the Cuban territory, act as mercenaries under the service of the US hostile and aggressive policy, and work to subvert the constitutional order legitimately established in Cuba by trampling over the right of the Cuban people to self-determination..

This undeclared war against Cuba the questioning of the Cuban political and election system constitutes one of the main pillars of the hostility against Cuba promoted by the United States on democracy and human rights matters. The powerful propagandistic machinery in the hands of the US imperialism has been responsible for attacking the Cuban system and for presenting the mercenaries they finance to promote their anti-Cuban policy as “dissidents or pacific opposition” and as “Human Rights activists”.

It is worth nothing that the Cuban Revolution freed, saved and strengthened the Cuban nation. The Cuban people broke the yoke of institutional racism, women discrimination, nepotism, political corruption, murders and political disappearances, illiteracy, chronic unemployment, ideological domination, the imposition of pseudo-cultural patrons which are alien to it, as well as of hunger and misery. This is a simple political system which stands for a faithful expression of the will of its people in the exercise of their legitimate right to self-determination. It is genuinely authentic and autochthonous, widely democratic and participative by all who wish to do so.

Past experiences have vividly shown the people of Cuba the disastrous consequences of the so-called liberal bourgeois democracy. Cubans have lived the sad experience of the “multi-party” and “representative” system, which in the case of Cuba, brought about external dependence, corruption, political and administrative fraud, hunger, physical mistreatment and torture, disappearances, discrimination and institutional racism.

From its very beginning, the Cuban Revolution was involved in designing a scheme which would allow for the eradication of all these inherited evils. Since then, it has strived to develop its deeply humane social justice and equity project, which has guaranteed for the Cuban people, the full exercise of all its rights, without distinction of any kind. Democracy in Cuba does not represent a formal and abstract concept. It is guaranteed through the full participation of citizens in the carrying out of all public matters and through dealing with and meeting the spiritual and material needs of the human being. Democracy is the government of the people, by the people and for the people. The Cuban people continue to move

forward in its revolutionary process of continued transformations for the deepening of democracy and people's participation.

Democracy in Cuba is sustained also in the plurality of opinions- which influence the reaching of the consensus determining the political, economic, social and cultural course of the nation-, and in the condition of every Cuban citizen of being part and beneficiary of the exercise of power. Every citizen is not only subject of the political power, but also beneficiary and co-owner of the patrimony, the riches and the nation's fundamental means of production. Every citizen has access to the basic services such as education, health, social assistance and security without any kind of discrimination.

The Cuban democratic system meets the authenticity, legitimacy, justice and effectiveness requirements.. The protection and guarantee of rights and liberties to Cuban citizens set forth in the Constitution of the Republic and the other national laws are compatible with the nature and scope of those rights and liberties consecrated in the Universal Declaration. And in numerous aspects, the recognition of and protection for such rights and liberties are wider and all-embracing.

Cuba has built a social system based on a Law State, where a judicial protection and material conditions are guaranteed for the enjoyment of all human rights by all.