

Message to: **High Commissioner Office for Human Rights.**

Subject of the message: **Organization of Srilankan Students graduated in Cuba.**

Name of the country referring to: **CUBA.**

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Message:

We wish to comment on certain aspects of life in Cuba, on which we had first hand experience while living in Cuba for 7 long years as students.

We from a third world developing nation were amazed to see the Cuban electoral system. Elections in Cuba are completely free of violence and forceful stuffing of the ballot boxes. In our country even a well-armed army guards are ineffective as the impersonations and stuffing of ballot boxes are sponsored by the governing party (which ever the party will be in power). Whereas in Cuba ballot boxes are guarded by the students (pioneers). In Cuba there is no vote rigging, election violence or buying votes for favours or for money, it is purely the will of the people of Cuba from the time the candidature is proposed; as they are nominated by the people at the grass root level and not by the party leaders. It is heartening to see that the most of the candidates are university graduates and they do not get a salary or allowances for being members of the Parliament. Unlike in our “democracies” the voter turnover in Cuba is 95% from 1976 on wards. Our impression is that in no other country the electoral procedure is so transparent, as vote counting is open to the public, anybody, like foreign press, diplomats or to any person from the public. Can we boast of this type of democracy in our so-called democracies?

In Cuba and only in Cuba the people (the voters) have the right to recall any person elected, at any time during his office, therefore no representative is above the law or the voters. When we see this from our third world set up, we can say that the Cubans are a privileged lot in this aspect too. Like all other countries in the world, Cuban people also have a right for self-determination so others should respect their right. Rather than trying to teach democracy to Cubans it would be much better for others to learn the positive aspects of the Cuban democracy, which is universally participatory from the beginning to the end. Can the liberal democracies tell that their representatives are really representing the people – the poor majority? The reality is that they grab the power with the help of the money of the wealthy and after elections those antisocials only serve the rich.

In sphere of human rights Cubans believe in having same rights for all: equality is the word! Whatever the rights enjoyed is equal to all. If there a privileged class in Cuba, it is only the children. They are the best-attended children in the world!

Some say there is freedom of expression in our set up, but as we have lived in both political systems, know that in these democracies there is no other rights guaranteed; like Education, good health system, cultural improvement or respect for life etc. even the freedom of expression not

total. One can speak but nobody cares; if you try to be too smart you are eliminated. While accusing Cuba for lack of freedoms the government of United States has blocked the Internet access for Cuban children, students and professionals. Is this not a crime and blatant violation of the right to know, right to interact, basic human rights?

We question what is the use of all human rights that the 1st world countries boast of if they could not eradicate poverty, hunger, illiteracy and the people are dying of curable and preventable diseases? We know that in Cuba all the basic needs are guaranteed free of charge. Can the champions of human rights provide at least a half of these basic things provided to the Cubans by their government? We can tell by our own experience that in Cuba there are no beggars, no street dwellers and not a single child dying of hunger, there is definitely no misery. Cuba is a highly civilized country where the respect for life is preserved to the utmost.

Some countries want to introduce their model in Cuba. But Cubans have their own way of thinking, and what they really need is to leave them alone to develop on their own without unnecessary harassments. Outsiders cannot judge the feelings of the Cubans. Cubans are more than happy and proud with their system. They are enjoying life to the maximum. So we firmly believe that outsiders should refrain from burdening them, with the problems innate to other developing countries by trying to introduce these corrupted political systems prevailing in our countries.

We feel that the people canvassing against the Cuban system are the few individuals who have lost their personal privileges, benefits and profits gained by inhuman cruel ways. Now in Cuba the privileged are the majority. United States government's funding and connivance with this bunch of counter revolutionaries is all well known. These individuals try to reestablish their status as exploiters while the US government has their age-old annexation plan, which Cuba has been resisting from ancient times. If both these parties really love the Cubans the way they preach, then the best thing they could do is, to leave the Cubans alone; leave them the way they are, as they are very well off and enjoying to the full, even with the criminal embargo by the United States that has been defeated in the United Nations on repeated occasions.

We request any person who is really concerned and want to feel how the majority of the Cubans think about their country, leaders, system, their privileges; like the universal right to good quality health, education etc and normal day to day life and also to know whether they are really longing for a change in near future, should actually must go to Cuba and live there for sometime, get to know the people and learn the way they wish to live. We think anybody who wants to criticize must learn first, then feel the way Cubans feel and see, whether there is anything worth while changing. We urge this because comparison from outside invariably leads to errors of interpretation.

The Cuban Revolution is made by the Cubans for the Cubans, and the Revolution is in constant contact and touch with the people and therefore feeling the pulse of the people. Over the years it has changed it's policies whenever needed, and for the benefit and improvement of life standards of the people.

Therefore we students who were there for 7 years studying in Cuban universities along with many students from Asia, Africa, Latin America, United States and Cuba have graduated as professionals and now have worked in our country for more than 20 years, know what we say.

Cuba is a dream country for the people of developing world. Do not compare Cuba with the first world great potentials. Compare and contrast with the developing nations. Any objective impartial observer would definitely be amazed by the socio – economical and cultural development Cuba had achieved in this relatively short period of history. This is what countries in the third world could not achieve with all the political and financial support and the blessings of the western powers and without a criminal economic blockade.

Lastly our Organization of Srilankan Students Graduated in Cuba, wish to express that Cuba is a country where Human Rights are respected and guaranteed. Cuba is in the path of progress in economic, social and cultural spheres. Cuba is fabulous! , Where none of it's citizens are left alone unattended.