

NEWSLETTER Amistad

ccfato.ca



Issue 47.2

Mar/Apr 2026



Bi-monthly newsletter of Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association Toronto



Hundreds Attend Monthly Rally in Toronto



Protesters at the Feb 22 rally. Photo credit: Lloyd Thai Tran

Sunday February 22nd was a special day for our regular monthly rally at the U.S. Consulate in Toronto.

The rally was considerably larger than usual, with about three hundred people participating, in reaction to escalated U.S. hostilities this year and illegal imposition to stop the safe arrival of fuel tankers in Cuba.

There were many community, political, and union groups represented, all vigorously protesting the blockade and the conditions that the U.S. administration inflicts upon the peaceful nation of Cuba.

Brandon Earnest, CCFA Toronto

A Statement from CCFA Toronto: Stop Trump's Terrorizing Tariffs

The Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association Toronto strongly condemns U.S. President Trump's latest attack on Cuba: an executive order to impose tariffs on countries who export oil to Cuba.

It is an escalation of its criminal and genocidal blockade of Cuba. Cubans are suffering from six decades of a blockade that has severely impacted its economic and social life.

Blackouts have increased due to fuel shortages and the breakdown of equipment caused by the blockade.

This attempt to cut off Cuba's fuel supply is an attack on the sovereignty of all nations.

Canada has diplomatic relations with Cuba for over 80 years. Canada has not bowed down to the U.S. dictating its policies and has voted 33 times at the United Nations Assembly calling for an end to the illegal blockade.

We call on Prime Minister Mark Carney and the Canadian government to condemn this arrogant, unacceptable move by the Trump administration. Now is the time to really show "elbows up" to the United States' endeavour to dictate its own failed and inhumane blockade and threatened tariffs. In face of this illegal, unilateral blockade, Canada should send shiploads of oil to help Cuba stand up for its people's needs against this bully, Trump.

Hands off Cuba! Hands off Canada!



**Keyda Sloane and Elizabeth Hill,
CCFA Toronto Co-Chairs**



Photo credit: Lloyd Thai Tran

★ CCFA TORONTO UPDATES

Container sent to Santiago de Cuba



Volunteers loading the donations into the container

On Saturday, March 7th, CCFA Toronto members joined the Canadian Network on Cuba, the Juan Gualberto Gómez Association of Cuban Residents in Toronto, YorkU4Cuba, and many others to fill a 40-foot container with solar panels, generators, wheelchairs, bikes, mattresses, medical supplies and food. The shipment is now heading to Santiago de Cuba and the small town of El Cobre.

As always, big thanks for your generosity to everyone who contributed!

RALLY FOR CUBA



MAR 29 & APR 26 1-2PM 361 UNIVERSITY AVE, TORONTO

Join our monthly protests against the US Blockade!



SCHOLARSHIP

For the 32nd Che Guevara Brigade (Apr 26 - May 9, 2026)

Deadline: March 31, 2026

Apply at [TINYURL.COM/CCFASCHOLARSHIP2026](https://tinyurl.com/ccfascholarship2026)



NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION FOR CUBA RALLY

Sun, April 19 1 - 4 pm

Christie Pits Park

A black and white photograph of a public rally. A man in a dark coat stands on a small stage, speaking into a microphone. A crowd of people is gathered in front of him, some holding signs. The background shows city buildings and trees.


We'd love to hear from you! If you have articles, editorials, or letters you'd like us to share, send them to canadiancubanfriendshiptoronto@gmail.com before December 15th (indicate "Amistad Submission" in the subject line). Please keep it under 1,200 words.

Calls to action: how you can support Cuba today

Solidarity with Cuba requires more than awareness. CCFA Toronto encourages its membership to take concrete steps to defend Cuba's sovereignty and support its people:

LET CUBA LIVE!

1. Contact your elected representatives

Write, call, or meet with your Member of Parliament, Prime Minister Mark Carney (pm.gc.ca/en/connect/contact), and Foreign Affairs Minister Anita Anand (anita.anand@parl.gc.ca). Demand that Canada send urgently needed humanitarian aid — including food, medicine, energy supplies, and oil — directly to Cuba. Canada must also oppose the United States' illegal and harmful blockade.

2. Encourage participation in the solidarity movement

Invite friends and family to become members of CCFA Toronto or another organization in the Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC) to strengthen the national movement for Cuba solidarity.

3. Mobilize your union

If you belong to a union, encourage your leadership to support CNC material aid campaigns through donations or educational events. Unions can also join the CNC as member organizations to broaden solidarity efforts across the labour movement.

4. Participate in the Canada-wide Day of Action for Cuba

Join demonstrations and solidarity activities across the country on **April 19**. Join CCFA Toronto in **Christie Pits Park** that day at **1pm**

5. Sign and share the parliamentary petition

Add your name to the CNC's parliamentary **e-Petition 7082** and help reach the goal of 15,000 signatures **before April 20**: Tinyurl.com/Petition4Cuba

6. Visit Cuba or join the Che Guevara Brigade

Travel is a powerful form of solidarity. Canadians can organize their own trips or participate in the Che Guevara Brigade delegation to experience Cuba directly and contribute volunteer labour.

A People's Tribunal



Full house at the People's Tribunal

The United Steelworker's Hall was packed with two hundred participants at the "People's Tribunal – Let Cuba Live" on February 22nd. Hosted by the Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC), and moderated by the organization's co-chair and CCFA Toronto executive member, Samantha Hislop. Detailed reports were given from nine witnesses on the charges, as follows:

"That the government of the United States of America through its 64-year-old economic, commercial, and financial blockade on Cuba, and Donald Trump's Executive Order of January 29, 2026, which further tightens the blockade and restricts critical oil imports to Cuba, is causing severe shortages of food and medicine; severely impacting civilian transportation and the delivery of health services, affecting water processing plants, sanitation, food production, and causing continuous blackouts throughout the country. That through the described actions, the United States is engaging in collective punishment of the Cuban people in violation of International Humanitarian Law and the United Nations Charter, namely the principles of sovereign equality, non-intervention and self-determination."

While, of course, the People's Tribunal is not binding, it was an amazing display of solidarity with a diverse array of progressive groups in Canada. The magistrate of the People's Tribunal, Juan Carranza, introduced the Consul General of Cuba in Toronto, Victor Manuel Garcia Sanchez, as a speaker and observer of the proceedings.

Nine witnesses representing labour, peace, student, religious, and solidarity groups, alongside Cuban nationals and officials, spoke with knowledge and experience about the effects of this on the people of Cuba.

One of the speakers was Andria Babbington, President of the Toronto & York Regional Labour Council. Andria spoke with passion as a Black, Jamaican woman who felt a

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particular connection to Cuba with its many medical missions to help Jamaica. She had one of the best lines of the Tribunal when she said: “today, if we don’t stand for Cuba, they will come for others tomorrow.”

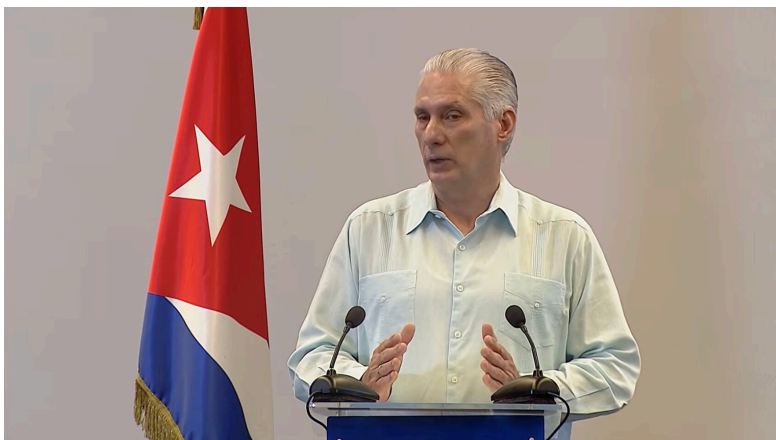
There were many messages of solidarity from a diverse set of voices, including the co-chair of the Toronto Association for Peace and Solidarity, Manden Murphy, religious leaders like Pax Christi’s Mary-Ellen Francoeur, CNC co-chair Julio Fonseca, and Palestinian Youth Movement’s Ghassan Abu Lawi. Ghassan gave a passionate speech linking the different struggles against imperialism and highlighted that the cause for Palestine is intertwined with Cuba’s struggles – it was a powerful statement of our strength being stronger together in solidarity with each other.

Representing the Canadian Federation of Students Ontario, Cyrielle Ngeleka, said, “what is happening in Cuba is not an isolated dispute, nor is it promoting democracy. It is part of a long-standing strategy that was designed to obligate countries to surrender to the economic and political control of the United States and its allies.”

The Tribunal found the U.S. and its far-right President Trump guilty of “crimes against the Cuban people and Cuba’s right to national self-determination,” and with unanimous support among the attendees.

Brandon Earnest and Elizabeth Hill, CCFA Toronto

Cuba Confirms Talks with Trump



Miguel Diaz-Canel in TV address on March 13

Cuba’s President Miguel Díaz-Canel confirmed today in a televised address that talks are taking place between Cuban and U.S. officials a day after the Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a statement saying the Cuban government would soon release 51 prisoners.

The statement said that the prisoner release was “in the spirit of goodwill, close and fluid relations between the Cuban

state and the Vatican.”

The Vatican has a history of mediating negotiations between the two governments.

The Catholic Church helped facilitate the secret negotiations that led to the historic opening with Cuba under the Obama administration.

According to Díaz-Canel, the recent discussions have been led by Raúl Castro and involve international actors as well. Numerous reports in recent weeks indicated that the two governments were in talks. Trump has said repeatedly that a deal was in the works.

“They want to make a deal, and so I am going to put Marco [Rubio] over there and we’ll see how that works out,” Trump told CNN last week.

However, Trump also said his administration’s focus right now is Iran.

If “you do them all too fast, bad things happen,” said Trump. “We’ve got plenty of time.”

The Cuban government had previously denied substantive negotiations between the two countries were taking place, though it had recently been silent on the issue.

Díaz-Canel said today an agreement is still distant and that talks were “in the initial stages.”

No Fuel for Three Months

Díaz-Canel also spoke about the electricity crisis directly caused by the Trump administration’s oil blockade. He said no fuel has entered the country for the last three months, and that the country is now producing all of its thermoelectric power with domestically produced crude oil.

He said deeper blackouts are coming.

“Would a failed state be able to confront such a situation?” he asked rhetorically.

He thanked the “titans” who keep the country’s aging power grid running, emphasizing that the government and its people would continue to “act with creative resistance.”

Most of Cuba was in the dark for several hours last week, after the island’s main power plant broke down. The plant was back online the following day and power gradually returned. Since 2024, Cuba has gone through three total blackouts, the longest of which lasted for days.

In recent months, rolling blackouts — the norm since 2020 — have intensified since Trump announced the U.S. de facto oil blockade on the island.

With China’s help, the island has turned to solar energy to reduce its dependence on fuel and power plants. Last month, Díaz-Canel said 38% of the island’s daylight consumption now comes from solar power.

**Source: Belly of the Beast
Published on March 13, 2026**

We express our firm solidarity with the Iranian people: Statement from the ICAP



The Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP) expresses its strongest condemnation of the joint military attacks perpetrated today by the United States and Israel against the Islamic Republic of Iran. This warlike action constitutes a flagrant violation of International Law and the Charter of the United Nations, brutally breaching the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Persian nation and the fragile regional stability.

It is particularly serious and revealing that this attack This new aggression, which has caused hundreds of deaths and injuries — including the attack on an elementary school for girls in the province of Minab — as well as extensive material damage in at least 24 provinces of the country, demonstrates the absolute contempt of the aggressor powers for human life and for the multilateral mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of disputes.

It is particularly serious and revealing that this attack occurs barely one day after a new round of talks on the Iranian nuclear program concluded in Geneva, talks which, according to the mediators themselves, had seen “significant progress.” By launching this offensive, the United States and Israel have deliberately dynamited the diplomatic path and have chosen to unilaterally impose their designs through brute force, ignoring the calls of the international community for a negotiated solution.

The statements issued by the leaders of Washington and Tel Aviv are equally alarming and demonstrate the petty and illegal nature of their interests. President Donald Trump justified the operation with the explicit objective of achieving “regime change” and urged the Iranian people to engage in a civil war to overthrow the current government, while Benjamin Netanyahu expressed his aspiration to “eliminate the existential threat” he claims the Persian nation poses to the Zionist regime. These proclamations constitute unacceptable interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign state and

deserve the repudiation of the international community.

We express our firm solidarity with the Iranian people, as well as with all the innocent victims of this irresponsible imperialist military maneuver. Likewise, we reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the defense of multilateralism and the peaceful solution of conflicts, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. We demand that the competent international mechanisms and institutions for conflict resolution act accordingly and stop those responsible for this barbarism.

World peace cannot be subject to the geopolitical interests of those who, ignoring the law, seek to impose their hegemony through destruction and death.

No More Foreign Intervention!

No to War!

Hands Off Iran!

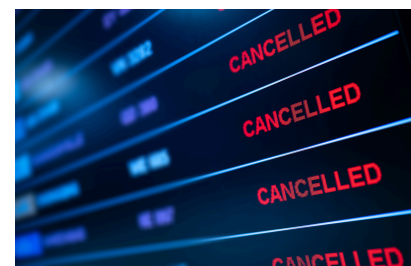
Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP)

Source: Siempre con Cuba

Published on February 28, 2026

A Note on Grounded Flights

In early February, the government of Canada updated its travel advisory to warn Canadians against all non-essential travel to Cuba due to unreliable fuel supply on the island. Within days, Canadian airlines suspended flights to Cuba for the winter. In its announcement, Air Canada specifically referenced the updated Canadian government travel advisory alongside fuel supply concerns when explaining its decision to suspend service.



While this appears to be a pragmatic response to logistical challenges, further inquiry suggests that the situation raises important political questions. In the same statement announcing the suspension of flights, Air Canada explained that it would send multiple empty flights to Cuba to retrieve Canadians and that, to do so, “Air Canada will tanker in extra fuel and make technical stops as necessary to refuel on the return journey if necessary.” This raises obvious questions about the logic of grounding passenger flights entirely.

Basic research done on the major airline websites indicate that it is generally a Boeing 737 or various models of Airbus which are used to travel to the Caribbean. Considering that more than 1 million Canadians travel to Cuba each year, could there be some flexibility in using a larger model of

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airplane that has a larger fuel capacity which would allow for return travel without added stops? Why hasn't a larger model of airplane been considered as the first solution? Would larger planes with reduced frequency departures from Canadian airports be a viable option? Further, if the possibility of a tanker in oil is on the table, why would we not do that? And if we are capable of tankering oil for our own use, why can't we supply some amount of fuel to alleviate the gross suffering imposed on Cuba through the blockade?

It remains that Canadian tourism makes up a majority of Cuban tourism. Canadians have spent decades enjoying the sun and sea on the Caribbean island, and it is often one of the only affordable vacations for working class people. Disabling this opportunity only serves the interests of our bloodthirsty neighbours to the south, robbing the Cuban state of much needed revenue and robbing the Canadian people of an escape from this crushing winter.

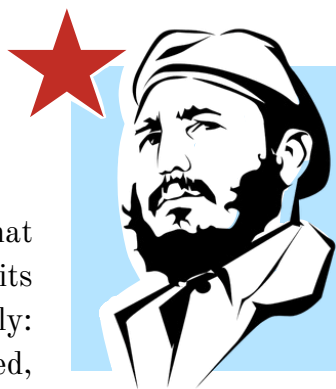
The current American administration has vowed to crush Cuba by the end of the year. Canada has committed to maintaining and protecting its own independence, as well as the military defense of Greenland from US aggression, but will not commit to the defense of Cuba, a country under a literal siege. Why is that? The rhetoric offered by commercial airlines and the federal government is just that - rhetoric. It is not solution oriented for either Cuba or Canada, and can only serve the interests of the United States regime.

In summary, the decision of the federal government to ground flights to Cuba operates on flimsy logic, and if one young woman can poke holes in their statements with a few google searches, what else is hiding behind the neutral tone of our government's position on Cuba?

Alexandra Moss, CCFA Toronto member

“**T**o the accusation that Cuba wants to export its revolution, we reply: Revolutions are not exported, they are made by the people.”

Fidel Castro



Café Cuba: countering disinformation, and in support of the Brigade



Sophia Ilyniak's opening speech for Cafe Cuba

On March 15, members and friends of CCFA Toronto gathered at the Shevchenko Museum for another Café Cuba event – an afternoon of film, conversation, and solidarity with the Cuban people.

The date carried deep historical significance. March 15 marks the anniversary of the Protest of Baraguá, when Cuban independence fighters rejected a colonial “peace” agreement that would have preserved Spanish rule and slavery. In 1878, General Antonio Maceo famously told Spanish negotiators: “No, we don't understand each other.” This statement has become an enduring symbol of Cuban independence. Nearly 150 years later, the spirit of Baraguá continues to resonate as Cuba confronts an ongoing economic siege through the U.S. blockade.

A central theme of the event was the importance of Canadians understanding Cuba and challenging the disinformation that often surrounds it. Attendees watched selections from the documentary series, “The War on Cuba,” produced by the independent media collective, Belly of the Beast. The series examines the impacts of the U.S. blockade on everyday life in Cuba – from shortages of medicine and fuel to the creative ways Cuban communities organize to sustain social programs. A lively discussion followed the screening, touching on the intertwined struggles of Cuba and

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other countries facing US imperialism, the ongoing fuel blockade, and remarks from the Consul General for Cuba in Toronto, Victor Manuel Garcia Sanchez.

The Café Cuba event served as a fundraiser for the Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade scholarship program. All proceeds from the afternoon, including the sale of baked goods, t-shirts and books, will help send young people from Toronto to Cuba to participate in the brigade. The brigade allows participants to witness Cuba's social and political life firsthand, volunteer alongside Cuban workers, and deepen international solidarity at a particularly critical moment. Donations to the scholarship fund help ensure that financial barriers do not prevent young people from participating in this important exchange.

Sophia Ilyniak, CCFA Toronto

Reflections from Cuba by Ron Berezan

Many of you have been writing to ask how I/we are doing and if we are ok. Short answer: we are more than OK!! I finally have a moment to relax and reflect on what has been another amazing experience here in Cuba. I expected to be here until February 24th but tomorrow I will take what may be the last flight out of Cuba to Canada for the near future. More on this below. This is my 43rd trip to the country and the 28th group I have been able to introduce to the incredible agro-ecological farming and permaculture movements here in the country. Once again I feel inspired, renewed, grateful and privileged to be able to have this close connection with farmers here, their families and those who work to support them.

But this time around these feelings are mixed with sadness and anger at what Cuba and its people are being forced to endure by the bully rogue state to the north, and dismay at my own country's failure to provide any kind of response, leaving our long time friends to fend for themselves in the face of the fascist imperialism that also now threatens our own country. Prior to Covid, over 1 million Canadian tourists per year were travelling to Cuba enjoying the winter sun, beaches, vibrant culture, gorgeous architecture and the incredible warm and generous hospitality of the Cuban people. Only Canada and Mexico have maintained constant diplomatic relations with Cuba since the socialist revolution of 1959. In many respects, our relationship with Cuba is one of the few ways in which we have differentiated ourselves from the USA. Our special relationship with Cuba is part of our national identity. If ever

there was a time to renew our close ties with the people of Cuba, that time is now!

CONDITIONS ON THE GROUND

It is important to be clear that the current aggression towards Cuba by the USA is nothing new. It is just the latest chapter in the intensification of economic terrorism against this small island that started 60 years ago. Cubans are, unfortunately, very used to dealing with this. The latest American blockade of fuel at a time when Cuba was already struggling is a "tightening of the noose" and is definitely making life harder for most people. But that is not the whole story.

NOBODY is panicking. There is NO looting as far as I can see, no hoarding or overt conflict between people as the electricity and fuel crisis worsens. There is still lots of food available though prices have risen sharply and appear poised to continue to rise.

For Cubans who have financial resources (mostly the self-employed), they can still get pretty much anything they need or want. For the majority of the population who depend on their state wages to meet their needs, these are very tough times. For vulnerable people, these are becoming desperate times. Our friends at the CCRD in Cardenas, a small organization that supports the most vulnerable Cubans, tell us that more and more people are coming to them looking for food, medicines, clean water and other necessities. As fuel becomes increasingly scarce, this is only going to become worse.

For the past decade or so, much economic activity has shifted to the black market and to small private businesses both of which are subject to high inflation. The average Cuban is struggling to make ends meet and is doing without some of the basics.

FUEL SHORTAGES

Gas is currently being rationed and only people with vehicles can access it and only 20 litres at a time and not very often. The price of taxis has doubled, except for the many electric small vehicles that are now commonplace throughout most cities in Cuba. Diesel is almost completely unavailable as we found out on our trip through the countryside when we too had to resort to inflated prices on the black market. The result is that many: people are not going to work, hospitals are struggling to function, ambulances can't move, food is hard to get from the countryside to the city, tractors can't operate and there is no more jet fuel (more on this below).

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The good news for Cuba is that Russia has already sent two tankers full of fuel and I just heard today that the president of Mexico is vowing to also defy Trump's ridiculous threats! Viva Mexico! Canada – where the hell are we on this point? Hopefully Mexico's courage will lead to other nations stepping up and the collapse of Trump and Rubio's fantasy games.

POWER CRISIS

I am going to start with the good news here first. Cuba is well underway to a massive transition towards solar energy powering the national grid. We were told repeatedly that solar energy now supplies over 30% of Cuba's power and that the goal is to be over 50% by 2030. Driving through the countryside we saw massive solar installations (parques solares) built by the Chinese government with Cuba over the past months and years.

Many homes now have their own solar systems, including the majority of the "Casa particulares" (B & B's) that we stayed in. In a recent speech addressing the current crises, Cuban President Diaz-Canel pledged to start locating solar systems on hospitals, schools, banks and other critical infrastructure. Cubans have been widely up-taking a wide range of small electric vehicles which are now widely used as taxis and utility vehicles.

At this rate, Cuba may soon become a global leader in the transition to renewable energy and this makes perfect sense for a country with so much sun! It is definitely a critical step towards energy sovereignty for the country that I believe will pay dividends in the long run.

The bad news is that the older thermal electric plants are failing fast and there is little to no fuel to power them. That means daily blackouts of up to 22 hours in some places are commonplace. This makes everyday life extremely difficult – if the power comes on in the middle of the night, people get up to cook food, wash clothes, charge devices, irrigate crops and do whatever else they need to do – exhausting and frustrating to say the least.

FOOD

Cuba is a country in which seemingly contradictory truths can co-exist. Having been going to Cuba regularly over the past twenty years, I have never seen so much incredibly good food available on farms, in farmer's markets, in restaurants and on the street as I did on this recent trip. We visited around 20 farms and we ate extremely healthily and well. We had some truly fabulous meals.

Yet, many Cubans are currently very food insecure. Inflation has made common foods like eggs, milk, meat and vegetables

out of reach for many people. If you have the resources, there is a lot of great food available. If you don't, you go without. The food ration stores run by the state used to offer all Cubans a guaranteed monthly diet but these have now all but dried up since tourism crashed and the Cuban economy entered a freefall.

Inflation, driven by the fuel crisis, is making this all the more acute. If fuel supplies do not arrive to the country soon there will indeed be a humanitarian crisis including starvation and malnutrition. Fortunately, China and Mexico have also been sending shiploads of emergency food – another action that Canada could and should be taking.

FARMS

Cuba's agroecology, urban agriculture and permaculture movements are what first drew me to the country 20 years ago and what keeps me going back. I am so grateful to have developed close friendships with so many farmers and permaculturalists over the years. They are smart, visionary, capable, generous and very committed to helping their communities achieve more food security.

There was a consistent pattern at the farms we visited this year. The current energy crisis is the limiting factor to growing more food. Without reliable energy, crops cannot be irrigated and cannot thrive. Those farmers who have been able to access funding to put in their own solar systems were doing far better than those relying on the grid.

For that reason, I am working with our Cuban partners and Canadian/American friends of Cuba to launch "SOLidarity with Cuban Farmers!" A program that will raise funds to help provide small solar systems to Cuban farmers to power essential farm infrastructure like irrigation pumps. You can read more below about how you can support this effort.

POLITICS

I am not going to say too much here as this is a huge topic. Like any other country, there is a wide range of opinions in Cuba about the current political situation from hard core support to strong opposition. Given the length and depth of the economic crisis, huge out migration, and a fairly rarified government bureaucracy, there is cynicism about the current government's ability to solve the problems of everyday life. Most people say change is needed, even if they strongly support the revolution and Cuba's socialist framework. They are worn out, frustrated, and tired of government slogans that don't deliver. Although there have been many changes in recent years – a huge opening up to small businesses and self-employment, for example – government wages have stagnated,

costs have risen, and many families have become fragmented by the emigration crisis.

I have met NO ONE in Cuba who wants the country to surrender its future and identity to the American government or American capitalists. People want change but remain defiant, nationalistic and committed to their own political sovereignty – at least those with whom I interact.

THE CANCELLATION OF FLIGHTS BY CANADIAN AIRLINES

This is where I will rant a bit. First off, airlines from Europe, Latin America, the United States and other parts of the world are continuing to fly to Cuba – full stop! Tourists are still arriving, going to hotels, hitting the beaches, dining out in Havana, bird watching, hearing music and more.

From my understanding, West Jet was the first airline to pull the plug with the explanation that they can no longer refuel in Cuba (that was true). Air Canada and Transat soon followed.

Never mind the fact that the planes can carry enough fuel from Toronto to go out and back. Never mind the fact that there are options to refuel on other Caribbean Islands as many European carriers are doing.

Canada is the number one source of tourists for Cuba. Completely pulling the plug is an incredible blow to thousands of workers in hotels and restaurants throughout the country and to the overall economic health of the country.

It galls me that for decades West Jet (by far the biggest carrier to Cuba of Canadians) has been profiting from Cuban tourism but has no qualms about bailing on the country at a time when tourism is critical for economic survival. Nor was there ANY acknowledgment whatsoever of the damage this would do to Cuba, of the immorality and injustice of the American fuel blockade on the country – NOTHING! Only Transat, to my knowledge, expressed any regret about cancelling flights.

WestJet by the way claimed in the media that they would ensure the repatriation of all of their customers back to Canada. This was an out and out lie. Several of us in our group of 22 were given cancellation notices and NO further communication and no options from West Jet for return flights home.

My partner was on the phone with West Jet in Canada for over an hour and the agent concluded there were no flights available for me to return home on. Thankfully Air Canada had some space so we were all able to get home. I fear this is not the case for everyone.

West Jet seemed to do their very best to communicate poorly (or not at all), have contradictory information and dodge any responsibility for their passengers while spinning a very

different story in the media. No more West Jet for me – adios!

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT CUBA

- **PLAN A TRIP TO CUBA** I guarantee you will not be disappointed! You can wait until normal flights resume or travel through Mexico, or, if you can stomach it, through Miami. I would have ZERO hesitation travelling to Cuba at present, despite what you are hearing in the media. You will be very well received! I'd even be happy to give you some suggestions if you get in touch with me. There are thousands of Canadians who travel to Cuba regularly, some even living there (yes you can!)
- **CONSIDER DONATING** to “SOLidarity with Cuban Farmers” This small project will be providing solar systems directly to Cuban farmers so they can keep growing food for their communities without interruption. Send an email to theurbanfarmer@shaw.ca.

Thanks for reading this far and for your solidarity with the people of Cuba. Cuba has given much to the world: treatment of over 2000 children from Chernobyl, thousands of doctors around the world, first response to the ebola and covid outbreaks, amazing music, art and so much more. It's time we reciprocate!

Ron Berezan, a farmer from Powell River B.C

UMD

The United May Day Committee
presents

**INTERNATIONAL
WORKERS DAY 2026**

Saturday, May 02 || United Steelworkers Hall

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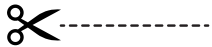


**Help us fight the cruel
US blockade on Cuba!**

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 Canadian Cuban Solidarity Association Toronto

 canadiancubanfriendshiptoronto@gmail.com



CCFA Toronto Application and Renewal Form

Membership includes a subscription to the bi-monthly Amistad Newsletter (6 issues annually). **Not sure if it's time to renew?** Contact us at canadiancubanfriendshiptoronto@gmail.com. Help us keep CCFA going by keeping your dues up to date.

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I wish to donate _____ to CCFA Toronto

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Email and physical mail

CCFA Toronto Statement

The Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association Toronto is active in promoting friendship, respect, and co-operation between Canadian and Cuban peoples. We work with other Canadian groups and international organizations.

Our activities aim to:

- Provide information and organize events related to Cuba for the public and media, focusing on culture, health, education, sports, and Canada-Cuba relations
- Counteract the deliberate misinformation about Cuba spread by the U.S.
- End the illegal U.S. blockade of Cuba and defend Cuban and Canadian sovereignty from U.S. interference

About Amistad

Amistad is the newsletter of the CCFA Toronto, posted six times a year with volunteer labour. The Editorial Committee reserves the right to edit submitted material. The opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Editorial Committee.

We encourage everyone interested to submit media articles, editorial ideas, and letters.

Email canadiancubanfriendshiptoronto@gmail.com

Deadlines are the 15th of even months.

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Olga Filiushkina, Sophia Ilyniak