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"¡Basta!": a rally that moves forward



Protesters at the March 29 rally. Photo credit: Reid Boyes

At our monthly rally in front of the U.S. Consulate in March, we were met with a counter-protest: anti-Cuba voices joined by their anti-communist allies. They arrived with hostile messaging, even holding signs that read "Trump, finish the job." But we had anticipated their presence and came prepared - showing up in strong numbers - and full of energy and movement. There were lively speeches, music, and a sense of collective purpose that carried throughout the rally.

Across the police barricade, the counter-protesters shouted and jeered. Completing the juxtaposition, we closed - as we often do - with some dancing. As Fidel Castro put it in the Second Declaration of Havana (1962): "Porque esta gran humanidad ha dicho: ¡Basta! y ha echado a andar. ("Because this great humanity has said: Enough! and has begun to move forward.").

We packed up and headed out together, and they remained behind, still shouting into the wind.

Sophia Ilyniak, CCFA Toronto

Eyewitness report from Havana: Nuestra América Convoy challenges US blockade, builds solidarity

From March 19 to 23, members of the Canadian Network on Cuba were in Havana for meetings and activities convened around the Nuestra América Convoy. The Convoy is an international humanitarian escort bringing both material aid and an influx of eyewitnesses to Cuba during an increasingly desperate chapter in the history of US aggression in the region.

This was a difficult but necessary time for us to return – not only have Canadian airlines conspired to cancel all flights to Cuba until June, but the island's life systems are beginning to show signs of collapse under imperialist pressure.

Since Donald Trump's January 29 announcement of a total blockade of fuel to the island, the Cuban people have been plunged into a state of life-threatening privation, facing frequent blackouts, food shortages and spoilage, lack of sanitation and every kind of uncertainty. Even Cuba's world-renowned healthcare and education systems have been pushed to the brink. Important surgeries are paused and many universities and secondary schools have reduced and cancelled classes. Public transportation is all but halted. These shortages are the culmination of more than six decades of economic warfare by the United States, and by all accounts today's conditions are the worst that Cubans have yet faced in the course of their movement for independence and socialism. By their own account, Marco Rubio and Donald Trump intend to replace the leadership. But as the US escalates its maximum pressure campaign against the Cuban government, all Cubans suffer. This is an unambiguous instance of collective punishment, prohibited by the Fourth Geneva Convention, and within view of the whole world.

That said, mass media coverage has long failed Cuba, distorting the multi- pronged blockade and blaming its

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★ CCFA TORONTO UPDATES

CCFA meeting with the Davenport MP Julie Dzerowicz



CCFA Toronto members meeting with Julie Dzerowicz, middle

On March 19th, a group of ten CCFA members from the Davenport riding met with our Member of Parliament Julie Dzerowicz to discuss the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Cuba and to advocate for stronger Canadian action.

Members shared reports outlining the severe challenges facing the Cuban people, including prolonged blackouts, strain on hospitals and infrastructure, and the escalating impact of the U.S. blockade. The discussion emphasized how recent U.S. measures have deepened the crisis and further restricted Cuba's access to essential resources.

The group called on the Canadian government to take concrete steps in support of Cuba's sovereignty and well-being. These included increasing material aid, expanding trade, defending Canadian sovereignty against U.S. extraterritorial measures, and reinstating flights to Cuba while removing the current travel warning that discourages Canadians from visiting.

CCFA members also raised concerns about the lack of balanced perspectives in recent government discussions on Cuba, including the February 26 Foreign Affairs Committee hearing. In response, the group provided the MP with a number of materials, including firsthand accounts from Cuba, policy statements, and submissions from the Canadian Network on Cuba.

While the discussion provided an opportunity to raise these concerns, members emphasized that the scale of the crisis requires far more decisive action. CCFA will continue to advocate for a stronger and more meaningful response from the Canadian government.

Adam Kendal, CCFA Toronto







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.

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outcomes on the revolutionary government. Even amid a present surge of interest in Cuban reality, lurid photojournalism and unsubstantiated rumour predominate across all major outlets. Under these circumstances, the urge to see for oneself is powerful – but the many contradictory effects of the blockade are not simply disclosed to sensory experience. These outcomes require greater investigation and yes, politics, on the part of every well-intentioned interloper. Many such onlookers appeared in Cuba this past weekend alongside the solidarity movements, and a quick survey of the stories filed from Havana by professional journalists reveals a persistent anti-government narrative that's perfectly in keeping with the emphasis of right-wing outlets who encourage the blockade. While Kate Linthicum, writing for the LA Times, spent her visit to Havana seeking out pro-Trump voices from a small and disaffected stratum, Nathan Robinson's Current Affairs eloquently condemns the US blockade but only as a counterproductively cruel means of a regime change that he eventually endorses.

Cuba's bustling tourist industry has always risked exposing the task of socialist construction to uncharitable observation, and any influx of large personalities from social media cannot but hazard the same. However well-intentioned, self-motivated and sensationalized interviews with passersby cannot distill the essence of the present disruptions, even if they help to apprehend an anxious mood and to catalogue the extreme behaviours to which many Cubans have been pushed.

The correct interpretation of this US-instigated crisis requires not only solidarity, but organization.

Friendship with the peoples

Crucially, the international guests associated with the Nuestra América Convoy were hosted by El Instituto Cubano de Amistad con los Pueblos (ICAP, Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples) who guided more than 600 delegates from over 30 countries through dozens of events with magnanimity amid straitened conditions. These activities began with a meeting at the Palacio de las Convenciones, where attendees from the United States, Colombia, Chile, Italy, the São Paulo Forum and the European Parliament gave solidarity greetings before President Miguel Diaz-Canel addressed the Convoy directly. In his remarks, Diaz-Canel prosecuted the US blockade at length, extolling the strength of the Cuban people and the continuity of their revolution.

At separate events spanning multiple days, both Diaz-Canel and ICAP Director Fernando González Llort highlighted Cuba's gratitude before this wave of international support. Notably, the gathering was only the social accompaniment to a flotilla from southeastern Mexico carrying more than 20 tons of essential supplies, as well as a chartered plane with 3,000 kilograms of medical aid.

Organized by Progressive International, CODEPINK and others, the humanitarian portion of the Nuestra América Convoy should not be underestimated, nor the political clarity of many participants within an urgent broad front formation. At a welcoming event, Progressive International co-coordinator David Adler spoke of the Nuestra América Convoy as defending the idea of Cuba – one of egalitarianism and social welfare, principles lacking from those societies organized chiefly for profit. This broad appeal helps to combat a sense of hopelessness that pervades these same societies, where almost all Convoy participants live and work. In such circumstances, an idea can flare as a light in the darkness, guiding one toward a righteous stand. In a crisis such as Cuba faces today, it becomes a tactical necessity to build a broad humanitarian movement. This is particularly true given the instigating role of a deeply unpopular figure such as Donald Trump and the significance of Cuba to his administration's plans. People of conscience from all sectors of society must stand up and defend the right of a small island nation to live free of collective punishment by sanctions, blockades and military threat. Beyond this negative, strictly legal demand, however, we mustn't forget what we're defending and why.

What we defend in Cuba is not just an idea: it is a material reality. In standing up for Cuba, we are defending economic democracy and popular power. We are defending the right of working people everywhere to the fruits of their labour, and against the predation of capitalism. The struggle is not only one of ideas – it is an international class struggle for the benefit of all but a dispossessing few.

We defend Cuba not only because Cuba needs us, but because Cuba leads. If Cuba falls, it will spell disaster for the world – not by analogy, which is no basis for solidarity, but by example. In Adler's words, "a century of anti-colonial struggle is at risk."

In his address, Diaz-Canel spoke of the enormous burden placed upon the present generation, who now confront one of the gravest tasks in Cuban history: "to save the homeland, socialism, and to give continuity to Fidel's revolution." As we imagine what it means to move in solidarity with these inheritors, we must be ready to receive our own equivalent instructions.

"When you go back to your countries," Diaz-Canel said, "you must multiply the force of the people." This international strength will not transpire by storytelling, nor by the

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multiplication of image, nor the amplification of rumour. Fidel Castro emphasized the importance of the Battle of Ideas in the twenty-first century; and Fernando González, a national hero and veteran of the Cuban Five, implored those attending to take part in "digital activism" and to counter corporate lies with truth.

This work is essential, but the determination of truth also requires trust – not only in one's sources, but in the revolution underway. The truth in Cuba is not an appearance but a process, and its very telling commands participation.

The view from Havana

With this involvement in mind, what did we experience on this most recent visit to Cuba? At ICAP, Fernando also spoke of the arrogance and cynicism of US imperialism; and while we were in Havana the US Treasury Department announced that it would not allow Russia to deliver oil to Cuba – an infantilizing order that presumes to wedge itself between old friends.

At the time of writing no oil has entered Cuba for three months, and on day two of our visit the national power grid went down entirely for the second time this month.

The fuel shortage in the country was apparent. Automobiles were scarce and traveling by taxi required US dollars and a day's notice to schedule. The streets were full of motorized tricycles with passenger carriages, a kind of rickshaw run by solar-charged batteries, and the classic cars for which Havana is so photogenic were few and far between or still. Infrequent transit stops were crowded with people, unsure of whether a bus would ever arrive. Individuals stood on the side of the road to hail rides, often waving Cuban pesos in the air to indicate their willingness to pay any driver who would pick them up. We spent time with an established musician who told us that the cost of transporting his gear so greatly exceeded the fee that he could no longer afford to perform.

The most reliable way to get around was by foot, and walking to our destinations took up much of each day. We cautiously stepped down sidewalks that were crumbling and at times treacherous to pass. During evening blackouts, we strolled down dark and narrow streets, passing families who had moved their activities out into the cool night air. Older gatherings played dominoes by moonlight while younger people sang along to their car radios.

Despite the unfamiliar and dimly lit paths we ventured down, our safety was rarely if ever of concern. This is noteworthy, where the blockade explicitly intends to set desperate people to war with themselves. In almost any US city, a half day of the difficulties that the Cuban people face would instigate far greater social turmoil than is apparent here.

Other concerns presented themselves, however. Trash had piled up on corners, waiting for garbage trucks to refuel and resume collection. We were regularly approached by people with curiously similar stories designed to elicit donations of USD. It was heartbreaking when they felt the need to apologize for having asked, flashing a look of wounded dignity. We also walked by people greeting each other joyously, laughing and joining in song. We saw the colonial-era mansions that have been turned into headquarters of Committees for the Defence of the Revolution, into polyclinics, schools and housing for the people. These staples remain despite obvious dilapidation, fulfilling crucial functions at reduced capacity.

While earlier visits might have furnished a less worrisome appraisal, one feels the strain not only of the blockade itself, but of a collective heave against its unacceptable conditions. Cuba is fighting – not just for survival, but to protect its very real achievements. As such, the stark contradictions one sees in Cuba do not indicate a "failed state," but a nation's resolve to continue its sovereign development in the shadow of history's most powerful empire.

That said, the ingenuity by which Cubans work around the blockade creates a patchwork feeling, and particularly in the dark. Many small businesses, from bars to bodegas, have their own backup generators and power supply. These often use home generators linked to solar panels, or batteries that can be charged from the grid while the power remains.

The relative autonomy of these small enterprises from Cuba's electrical system, rocked as it is by shortages, means that even in a blackout, every street is pocked with lights. Such urban constellations could be said to visualize an increasingly uneven social fabric; but this too is only half the story.

We were also told of how small businesses with their own modest systems frequently lend power to nearby polyclinics and plug gaps in essential services – not to undermine or to evade state control but to protect their neighbours in a crisis, without fanfare or condition. To put it plainly, the collective spirit of Cuban society, instilled over decades of superior education and heightened struggle, can't be extinguished half so quickly as the US hopes.

Let Cuba Live!

The Cuban reality is complex, but our task is clear. As the Convoy departs Havana and the media binge begins, we must redouble our efforts at solidarity.

This means linking our material aid to political campaigns, and refusing to speak of desperate conditions without

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identifying the causes and denouncing the US blockade. This means working through the appropriate channels so that relief never arrives with compromising conditions or places unacceptable demands on Cuban sovereignty. This means increasing the pressure on the government of Canada to assert our economic and political independence of US monopoly and to break the blockade, and advancing these demands through the trade union movement where we wield maximum strength. Anything short of this work would be a merely charitable contribution to an island that continues to give all, as seen from the hospitality that it extends during the darkest hours.

Hasta la victoria siempre! Cuba must live!

Rob Crooks and Cam Scott, Canadian Network on Cuba

Re: Should Canada increase foreign aid to Cuba and support regime change? A letter to Toronto Star Editor

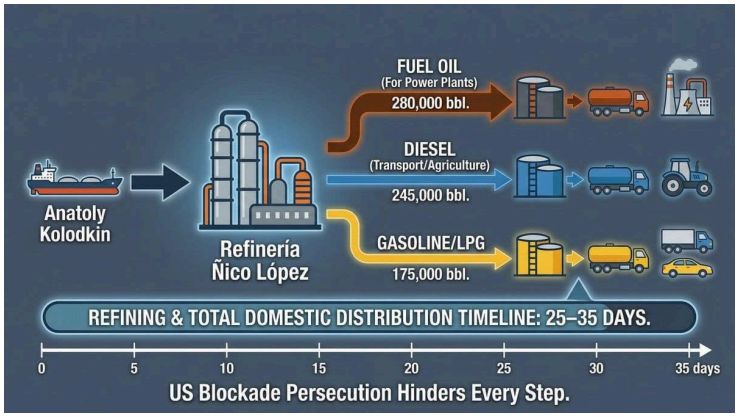
I have been going to Cuba several times a year for more than 20 years and have seen first-hand the positive changes that the Cuban Revolution brought about to its citizens: a high degree of literacy; free education right through university; free health care (with low infant mortality and high life expectancy); globally acclaimed biotechnology and pharmaceutical innovations; a rich cultural life in all branches of the arts; sports as a social right; LGBTQ rights and a new Family Code; environmental protection policies leading to the richest biodiversity in the Caribbean; organic gardening and agriculture, in addition to many other benefits.

These are not the achievements of a "failed state," as Michael Lima stated in the article; they are progressive achievements that many countries lack and would love to have.

Cuba attained these achievements despite six decades of a spiteful U.S. blockade that affected the economic and social lives of its citizens. Currently, Cuba is going through excruciatingly hard times because President Trump has intensified sanctions on Cuba, blocking the delivery of fuel oil that is necessary for all aspects of industry and life, including running water, incubators for infants, refrigeration for insulin, to name just a few. Such a cruel blockade is genocidal and would bring any country to its knees. Canada should increase aid to Cuba, including sending much-needed fuel. Any change in Cuba must come from within — the Cuban population is well-educated and can make its own decisions and changes.

Mara Glebovs, CCFA Toronto member
Published in Toronto Star on March 30, 2026

Send oil to Cuba!



The 730,000 bbls of Russian crude arriving via the Anatoly Kolodkin is an act of international solidarity against the US economic war. Yet, under maximum savings, this grants only 3–5 weeks of basic relief. The blockade of Cuba is the root of the crisis.

Pre-crisis, Cuba required 100,000 bpd. Washington's coercive measures & persecution of our fuel supply force a survival baseline of 40,000–60,000 bpd. We resist, sustaining life-essential services alongside 35,000 bpd of domestic production, despite US hostility.

Refining this crude into 280k bbl of fuel oil, 245k bbl of diesel & 175k bbl of gasoline takes 25–35 days. The US lies when denying its punitive policies, which complicate all logistics. Relief will be gradual, as the blockade hinders every step of distribution.

The math exposes the blockade's cruelty. The diesel yield covers merely 9–12 days at a rationed 20,000 bpd. The fuel oil offers ~1 week of stable power. Through immense national effort, this solidarity shipment will be stretched across a 3–5 week rationing window.

Our priority is protecting the Cuban people. We defend vital infrastructure—hospitals, water, food—at a 30,000–40,000 bpd minimum draw. This shipment delays the humanitarian catastrophe Washington desires, but the criminal blockade prevents true normalisation.

This delivery ensures just 21–35 days of stabilised operations. Without ending the illegal U.S. persecution of our energy imports, severe shortages will resume by early May. Cuba will not be starved into submission. End the coercive measures.

Source: Embassy of Cuba in the UK Twitter
Published on April 1, 2026

Flights To Cuba

I travelled to Cuba immediately before Canadian airlines began pulling flights. The last two weeks of January I was near Havana at a resort and it was a wonderful time despite the fuel shortages. Trump's order of a total fuel blockade was announced just before my trip, on January 11th. I could visibly see the stress the fuel shortage was having when I landed the following week. The eastern beaches of Havana are often spotless and well kept, but no fuel meant sanitation workers couldn't remove seaweed, so you saw kilometers of dry, dead seaweed washed upon the beach that I hadn't seen in previous years. As I boarded the trusty tourist bus in Havana, the bus passed by many streets without stoplights as I rode through Vedado. But the trip was still fantastic, I was safe, there was food, and Cuba was still in operation. I saw absolutely no reason to depart so suddenly or abruptly as many tourists would be forced by the Canadian airlines only days after my departure in February. In my view, it was a hasty and rushed decision the airlines made to cut Canadian tourists off, and it was a mistake.

Cuba needs tourism. Cuba needs Canadians. Canadians also need tourism and we need Cuba, it is a positive relationship on both sides. Our number one export to Cuba is tourism, and it not only gives working Canadians an affordable option for warm weather in the winter months, but it also infuses Cuba with much-needed economic activity so that they can purchase supplies and goods needed to make Cuba a better place for all its citizens.

The Canadian government technically has not made it illegal to fly to Cuba, it has issued a travel advisory to warn of the shortages the US blockade may cause, especially with the new hostilities Trump has constrained oil shipments with. But, the airlines have been very quick and impulsive to outright end all tourism to Cuba altogether. We are very aware that Cuba is dealing with a lot of pressure right now, and tourists should be informed. However, the country is still open and welcoming. They may not have a lot of power, but the resorts and hotels all had supply set aside until the summer months. Every day that Canadian airlines and vacation companies don't do business with Cuba is a day that Cuba misses out on vital economic activity it needs to help survive this genocidal onslaught Trump has unleashed. In other words, every day we don't send flights to Cuba is a day we side with Trump.

So what are we to do? And what is the current status? As of the time I write this piece, Air Transat states they officially won't send flights to Cuba until June 20th. Sunwing and WestJet haven't listed a date for resumption, but they state they have "ended all seasonal flights" for the winter season without any 2026 resumption date set. Air Canada has taken the drastic step to advise it won't resume until at least November 1, 2026, which doesn't seem to make any sense and the date is completely arbitrary.

What can be done is that we need everyone who cares about Cuba to start mailing, calling, and sending the message to these airlines that they need to resume service to Cuba. Not having any service whatsoever makes zero sense. The only way to change this is to send a message to these airlines and let them know they are losing money, they have customers who want to buy tickets, and that we're aware Cuba has shortages due to a very active US blockade. We still deserve the right to travel to Cuba directly from Canada. So I advocate everyone to write, call, and begin demanding service return. When we do this, we may see change. Without the voice of the people, we're just going to keep seeing airlines push resumption dates later and later. And that plays right into the hands of Trump. We can do better!

Brandon Earnest, CCFA Toronto

YCL educational event "No Embargo Against Cuba!"



Attendants of the YCL educational event

On April 9, the Young Communist League (YCL-LJC) hosted an educational event at York University titled "No Embargo Against Cuba!" It was attended by students and other members of the York community who wanted to learn more about the US embargo, or blockade, on Cuba, as well as solidarity efforts in Canada. Attendees heard from three panelists: Julio Fonseca, co-chair of the Canadian Network on Cuba, Karel Cantelar, from the Juan Gualberto Gomez Association of Cubans Resident in Toronto, and Nicolas Avendaño, executive member of the CCFA. After the panelists spoke, they took questions from the audience. Overall, the event showed the interest in Cuba solidarity among young people and students.

Nicolas Avendaño, CCFA Toronto

Cuba evaluates progress in energy transition and promotes bioenergy projects



Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel led a meeting on Tuesday, April 14, with experts and scientists to evaluate the progress of the energy transition on the island. The meeting highlighted the results of the joint work between the Ministry of Energy and Mines and the National Group of Universities for Renewable Energy Sources and Energy Efficiency (GNUFRE), focused on leveraging available resources and technologies to generate efficient solutions.

The meeting featured presentations of bioenergy projects focused on the production of biogas and biomethane from pig, livestock, and industrial waste. Among the initiatives highlighted were the Martí project, a pioneer in the use of biomethane for transportation, and the Managuaco project, which proposes a domestic fuel network.

The proposals aim to transform wastewater treatment systems into active energy sources through the use of biodigesters. The potential of forest biomass and the development of solid biofuels for use in industrial ovens, cooking, and steam generation were also discussed.

A key point of the meeting was the proposal for a new technological model for the sugar industry. This proposal seeks to transform the sector into a flexible and reliable source of electricity generation for the country.

Under this concept, the industry would not only be self-sufficient through the use of alcohol and biomethane, but would also provide fuel for transportation and byproducts for animal feed to increase meat production.

The exchange was moderated by Deputy Prime Minister Eduardo Martínez, with the participation of Deputy Prime Minister Inés María Chapman and the Ministers of Energy and Mines, Vicente La O Levy; Higher Education, Walter Baluja García; and Science, Technology and Environment, Armando Rodríguez Batista. Directors from various universities across the country also participated via videoconference to coordinate joint work between academia and the state sector.

The GNUFRE (National Network of Energy and Sustainable Development Centers) is a strategic pillar in the transformation of the country's energy matrix. Established in 2019 with seven institutions — Sancti Spíritus, Villa Clara, Havana, the José Antonio Echeverría Technological University of Havana (CUJAE), Oriente, Cienfuegos, and Matanzas — as a response to the development policy approved in 2014, this group has expanded its reach to all higher education institutions with energy development potential.

Currently, this academic network, which extends to all higher education institutions, plays a fundamental technical and legislative role, supporting the consultation process and presentation of the draft Energy Transition Law and its complementary regulations.

Furthermore, it leads innovation projects within the university system to strengthen the presence of science in national programs, ensuring that academic training and research translate into solutions applicable to the national energy reality. Cuba is making steady progress in installing 2,600 photovoltaic solar systems, designed to protect essential services in the face of the energy crisis. The Cuban government is implementing a national strategy to address the instability of the electrical system, exacerbated by shortages.

Source: Ed Newman for TeleSur
Published on April 15, 2026

U.S. Citizens in Cuba for New Breakthrough Alzheimer's Treatment

More than seven million people in the U.S. are estimated to suffer from Alzheimer's, a disease that systematically destroys a person's memory, personality and ability to function. While there is no cure, there's reason for hope. Despite being battered by a severe economic crisis fueled by U.S. sanctions, a group of patients from the U.S recently traveled to Cuba to access a promising medication called NeuralCIM.

Studies indicate that, unlike other medications, NeuralCIM has managed to slow the disease's progression over an extended period of time without significant side effects, and has even reversed symptoms in some cases.

Colorado physician Dr. Bill Blanchet has accompanied his patients to Havana and says the impact of NeuralCIM, in just six months, has been life-changing.

"Making this drug available to the rest of the world is a mandate. It's not a wish," Blanchet told Belly of the Beast. "It will change the world."

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Belly of the Beast's upcoming documentary, Teresita's Dream, tells the story of Dr. Teresita Rodríguez, a Cuban scientist who helped develop NeuralCIM while caring for her mother as she lived with the disease.

"It would be very unfair if this product couldn't reach other parts of the world," Teresita says in the documentary. "It's frustrating to think this could happen because of politics."

Source: Belly of the Beast
Published on February 27, 2026

A Cuban couple's recipe for survival



Abel Pez Cespedes and Kristen MacQueen

Kristen MacQueen, of the Prince Edward Island MacQueens, a family that's been running a bike shop & cycling tours around PEI since the 1980's, began working with her brother delivering fully-supported bike tours in Cuba in the 1990s. That was at the height of Cuba's "Special Period," when the USSR had collapsed, ending its assistance to Cuba. Then, as now, petroleum was in short supply. This took most motor vehicles off island highways, to be replaced with five million bicycles the Cuban government imported from China and sold to its people at very low prices. Suddenly Cuba became an enticing destination for cyclists worldwide. In this environment Kristen's father saw an opportunity: why not run cycling tours around Cuba? Thus was born "WowCuba," which over the next 30 years became the best-known (and best) bicycle tour group on the island. In 2000, at a Nature Tourism conference in Viñales, Kristen met Abel Pez Cespedes. They married a few months later. For the next 20 years, they led bicycle tours of Cuba. Then Covid hit, and tourism to Cuba dried up.

They put this enforced down time to good use. They'd built a small home in Playas del Este, about 20 km east of Havana. The house wasn't on the beach, but on a brush-covered hillside above the community of Guanabo. During the "Covid years" they turned a small plot of land on their block into a food forest with an organic garden and stingless bees. Just in time! The US pirating of petroleum shipments bound for Cuba put the island's economy in free-fall, leaving most homes without electricity for long periods of time. In February, Kristen wrote to me that she had just harvested buckets of beautiful mulberries which she shared with her neighbors. Sharing is, of course, a way of life in Cuba. Besides, with only sporadic power, preserving fresh food had become a challenge.

Despite the current rolling blackouts and shortage of gasoline, Kristen and Abel haven't given up. They installed a hybrid solar system at their guest house, and now offer support to independent cycling groups. While Abel maintains their stable of quality touring bikes, Kristen is compiling a database of B&Bs with solar or backup power where guests can stay without sacrificing comfort. She says, "Give me eco-tours, slow tourism, people looking to get back to the roots of travel and truly discover what's different about this island, what makes people tick, and have real exchanges where both sides benefit and learn from each other, and I'm all for it."

For those of you who would love to do just that, but are (temporarily, we hope!) blocked by Canadian airlines' sudden cancellation of flights to Cuba, yet want to help Cubans who are doing everything possible to help themselves, here's what Kristen posted on Facebook:

The fuel crisis is real. It's affecting flights, food transport, and daily life. But the Cuban people are resilient, and there are smart, sustainable ways to support them. Here's what works:

1. Solar dehydrators, which retain nutrients and keep healthy, organic food from spoiling with zero energy import.
2. Bikes and parts, which keep people moving without gas.
3. Window screens, a simple way to stop disease-bearing mosquitoes out and let fresh air in.
4. Bio-digesters, which turn waste into fertilizer (already working on some island farms) and fuel for cooking.
5. The Game Changer: Foreign investment in Cuba's new private businesses. Imagine local workshops building these things themselves. That's Cuba's future!

If you want to get in touch with Kristen, she can be reached at **info@wowcuba.com** or **info@elmiradordemarbella.com**. Abel's email is **reservas@ciclocuba.com**.

Rosa Jordan, CCFA Toronto member, author of *Cuba Unspun* and Lonely Planet's *Cycling Cuba*

Update on CNC Material Aid to Cuba



Every contribution made by our generous donors has a direct, appreciable difference on the situation on the ground in Cuba, as these containers bring much-needed relief to the Cuban people as they endure the effects of the intensified US blockade.

Two separate containers packed by the Juan Gualberto Gómez Association of Cuban Residents in Toronto have departed Halifax as of April 15th and will be arriving in Santiago de Cuba/El Cobre and Caibarien/Santa Clara respectively. We'd like to thank Containers 4 Cuba, whose donation covered the shipping expenses associated with the container to Santiago de Cuba.

In addition to these containers, now on their way, yet another container was loaded today by Association Juan Gualberto Gómez. This container is destined for Mayabeque and is filled with food, (rice, beans, canned fish and meat), medical supplies, hospital beds, wheelchairs and medical devices for the province's general hospital.

We thank all those who have been able to provide ongoing support of the Cuban people. This campaign is not an act of charity, but an act of solidarity—and its success speaks to the depth and power of the movement for Cuba here in Canada.

Canadian Network on Cuba

Che Guevara Brigade arrives in Cuba



32nd Che Guevara Brigade in Havana

The 32nd Che Brigade has arrived in Cuba for two weeks of solidarity and internationalism with the Cuban people, ICAP, and over 200 brigadistas from around the world. Our delegation had to fly through Panama and Mexico due to the flight cancellations from Canada and brought as much humanitarian aid as we were physically allowed! We will not be defeated! Energy is high as we begin the program today with opening ceremonies and an economics lecture at the BioTechnology facility in the scientific district in Havana!

Source: Canadian Network on Cuba Instagram
Posted on April 27, 2026



"There is often talk of human rights, but it is also necessary to talk of the rights of humanity. Why should some people walk barefoot, so that others can travel inluxurious cars? Why should some live for thirty-five years, so that others can live for seventy years? Why should some be miserably poor, so that others can be hugely rich? I speak on behalf of the children in the world who do not have a piece of bread. I speak on the behalf of the sick who have no medicine, of those whose rights to life and human dignity have been denied."

Fidel Castro

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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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