



Coalition of Concerned Medical Professionals (CCMP)

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**Contribution to the Report of the Republic of Cuba at the 117th session of the
Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD).**

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Trevor Martin; I am the Operations Manager of the New York metropolitan Coalition of Concerned Medical Professionals. I am writing this contribution to the 117th session of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) for the report on the Republic of Cuba.

Name of the Organization: Coalition of Concerned Medical Professionals (CCMP).

Description of the Organization: CCMP is a free and voluntary, private, unincorporated membership association of healthcare professionals, students and other community allies founded in 1973 organizing for comprehensive healthcare in the New York metropolitan area. A significant portion of our membership includes immigrants from throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

While advocating for long-term changes in the delivery of healthcare services in the U.S., our member health professionals maintain a free-of-charge preventive healthcare benefit program for uninsured and underinsured low-paid workers and their families. This includes health education sessions, preventive medical services and non-emergency dental care for the uninsured and underinsured. Additionally, we help reverse denials of care, assist with expunging bills and more for those whose insurance is inadequate.

While leading the efforts of CCMP, I have seen how racial discrimination, economic inequality and healthcare catastrophes have continued to worsen in New York City, New York state and across the U.S.

Context of My Input: For nearly 20 years, many of our member health professionals and other volunteers and organizers, including myself, have assembled delegations to travel to the Republic of Cuba, meeting contacts at healthcare facilities, attending international medical, allied science and social science conventions to learn from them and bringing much needed medical supplies as acts of solidarity with the people of Cuba. I have had the opportunity to travel twice to Cuba, and I have seen how Cuba has been able to build, and continue to maintain, a system of comprehensive healthcare for all Cubans, while facing over 60 years of a draconian commercial, economic and financial embargo, which is in fact a Blockade. More recently the Blockade has been strengthened through the U.S.'s implementation of further Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCMs) causing even greater shortages and hardships affecting all Cubans.

I first traveled to the Republic of Cuba at the end of August 2022 to attend the International Congress on Controlling Diabetes and Its Most Severe Complications, in Varadero, Cuba. While in Havana, before the commencement of the Congress, the CCMP delegation and I visited multiple healthcare facilities. This included the Policlínico de la Revolución, the Havana Diabetes Center, the Latin American School of Medicine (ELAM), the Ministry of Public Health's University Hospital in Havana as well as the William Soler Pediatric Teaching Hospital.

Additionally, at the end of January 2025, while in Havana for the Sixth International Conference for World Balance, our delegation visited the Carlos Juan Finlay Vaccine Institute, the Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, the Ministry of Public Health as well as the Institute of Neurology and Neuroscience. We easily observed in each of these institutions that the only discrimination occurring in the delivery of care is the across-the-board deprivation caused by the U.S. policies of the Blockade depriving the institutions of access to needed supplies, medicines, energy and more; an unjust discrimination that all Cubans share no matter racial and ethnic background.

In Cuba, healthcare is guaranteed as a right to all citizens, and the only force that prevents comprehensive care being delivered to all Cubans as needed is the U.S. Blockade. Yet Cuba continues to provide a free medical education to students from countries across the Global South enrolled in the Latin America School of Medicine (Escuela Latinoamericana de Medicina- ELAM), including students from the U.S. from ethnic and racial minority backgrounds in particular.

Since the triumph of the revolution of 1959, the Republic of Cuba has demonstrated a model of comprehensive healthcare services available to every man, woman and child in Cuba. This includes clinics, polyclinics and hospitals distributed throughout all neighborhoods and throughout major cities such as Havana, Cuba but also throughout the less populated countryside. I visited and toured several of these healthcare services, seeing the services provided to all Cubans of all races and ethnic backgrounds, at no financial charge to the patients.

This is in contrast to what I see In New York City, the wealthiest city in the world, every day, where 40% of residents can't afford their weekly food costs and over 25% of children live in poverty. The life expectancy gap between rich and poor men in the U.S. is 15 years, and 10 years between rich and poor women. 47% percent of healthcare workers across the U.S. have witnessed discrimination against patients in their facilities, and 52% say racism against patients is a crisis or major problem. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 in New York City, even the New York City Department of Health publicized "the COVID-19 pandemic magnified inequities and structural racism in New York City." This U.S. blockade against Cuba also impacts people here in New York and across the U.S. and disproportionately impacts U.S. ethnic and racial minorities.

Proposed Themes to be Included in the Presentation of Cuba's Report: In conclusion, only through the lifting of the Blockade can Cuba have the ability to build an equitable and just future for all of Cuba, as well as all people across the globe. I propose that the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in looking at Cuba, focus on the dire impact of the U.S. Blockade and other Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCMs) levied on Cuba, designed to cripple the lives of the people and overall society of the Republic of Cuba, harming the most vulnerable in society first and worst.

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