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## Human Rights in Latin America: Human Rights in Cuba

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## Human Rights in Cuba

by Susan Kemp

In 1959, Fidel Castro established a Cuban socialist state closely aligned with the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union's collapse brought an end to Soviet economic support which, combined with the U.S. embargo, created an economic crisis in the early 1990s. The Cuban government's instability and desire to maintain control overrides the individual rights of its citizens. These events are the background for the lack of fundamental human rights in Cuba today.

Cuba's legal system limits civil and political rights, such as the freedoms of assembly, religion, and expression. Citizen opposition is seen as connected to a broader conspiracy against Cuban authority. Therefore, actions taken to compel political conformity—including torture, detention, and imprisonment—are justified based on a security rationale. In 2003, Castro charged and arrested seventy-five pro-human rights dissidents as part of a larger crackdown on civil society.

Economic and social rights are also limited by government control. While Cuba is committed to education and free healthcare for all citizens, its policies restrict academic freedom and labor rights. Only educational curriculum that aligns with Marxist principles is allowed. The government also controls all means of production and permits only one labor union, which implements its objectives.

As a result of these rights violations, other countries as well as multilateral and non-governmental organizations have spoken out on conditions in Cuba. The U.S. embargo was applied as a consequence to the Castro regime, though the international community widely opposes these sanctions. International recognition of Cuba's situation is characterized by a demand for democratic legal reform that would allow Cuban citizens the enjoyment of essential human freedoms.

### Background

This section provides General Background information on the recent human rights situation in Cuba. The subcategory of Spanish Resources includes eight books on human rights in Cuba. The Socialism subcategory includes sources discussing the changing political environment in Cuba since the Cold War and the impact of the instability of Cuba's socialist system.

#### *General Background*

Americas Watch Committee and Human Rights Watch. 1993. Cuba: "Perfecting" the System of Control: Human Rights Violations in Castro's 34th Year: January 1992-February 1993. New York, N.Y.: Americas Watch.

*Abstract: This Human Rights Watch report assesses the status of human rights in Cuba in 1992. Covers rights violations including poor prison conditions, restrictions on academics and journalists, and long prison terms for dissidents. Argues that the system of control is part of the government's attempt to maintain power.*

Canadian Foundation for the Americas. Cubasource. [http://www.cubasource.org/index\\_e.asp](http://www.cubasource.org/index_e.asp).

*Abstract: This website, created and maintained by the Canadian Foundation for the Americas (FOCAL), contains a wealth of information regarding Cuba. It serves as a clearinghouse of information on Cuba and includes a bibliographic resource section.*

Mayra Gómez. 2003. *Human Rights in Cuba, El Salvador, and Nicaragua: A Sociological Perspective on Human Rights Abuse*. New York: London: Routledge.

*Abstract: Gomez looks specifically at violations in Cuba, El Salvador, and Nicaragua. Chapter 6 argues that repression tends to occur in a cyclical pattern in Cuba, and provides a historical analysis of human rights since 1959. Focus is given to the internal and external pressures on state repression, and the conclusion is that the level of the abuse is most affected by factors of internal stability. Provides empirical data and a theoretical foundation for the discussion of human rights.*

Human Rights Watch. 1999. *Cuba's Repressive Machinery: Human Rights Forty Years after the Revolution*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

*Abstract: This 1999 report discusses Cuba's poor performance on human rights according to international standards, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and other treaties Cuba is party to. Looks at a variety of violations such as repression of dissidents, legal restrictions, prison conditions, labor rights, and religious freedom. Includes recommendations for Cuba as well as the international community in regards to Cuba.*

Donald E. Schulz. 1993. "Can Castro Survive?" *Journal of Interamerican Studies & World Affairs*. 35(1): 89.

*Abstract: Discusses the possibility of the persistence of Fidel Castro's dictatorship in Cuba in spite of the surfacing of his regime's weaknesses. Cuban socioeconomic crisis; Prospects of a mass uprising; Overcoming the fear of repression; Extensive and intensive surveillance; Absence of institutional sanctuaries and dissident leaders; Discontent within the armed forces and the Ministry of Interiors; Cultivation of intellectual dependence and submission.*

### *Socialism*

Jorge I. Domínguez. 1986. "Cuba in the 1980s." *Foreign Affairs*. 65(1): 118.

*Abstract: Focuses on the political situation in Cuba during the 1980s. President Fidel Castro's successful recentralization of power; Economic conditions; Human rights violations; Support of the Soviet Union for the assertive government of Castro; Reorganization of internal affairs and the dismissal of top government and party leaders from various organizations and faction.*

Pedro Monreal. 2001. "Cuba: The Challenges of Being Global and Socialist At the Same Time." *Socialism & Democracy*. 15(1): 5.

*Abstract: Discusses the economic transformation of Cuba in line with the financial crisis during the early 1990s. Impact of the open economy and capitalism on Cuba; Status of socialism in Cuba; Pattern of economic development in Cuba.*

Marifeli Perez-Stable. 1999. "Caught in a Contradiction." *Comparative Politics*. 32(1): 63.

*Abstract: Reports on the transition of state socialism in Cuba. Review of the state socialism as proposed by institutionalism; Change and stability in State socialism; Mobilizational politics and the Cuban economy; Logic of political change in Cuba in the 1990s; Institutionalism and mobilizational authoritarianism.*

Patricia Ruffin. 1990. *Capitalism and Socialism in Cuba: A Study of Dependency, Development, and Underdevelopment*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

*Abstract: Discusses the history of Cuba's relationship to capitalism, including the emergence of social classes within Cuba. The second portion focuses on the development of socialism and the challenges for a socialist state facing the reality of capitalist dominance.*

Kosmas Tsokhas. 1980. "The Political Economy of Cuban Dependence on the Soviet Union." *Theory & Society*. 9(2): 319.

*Abstract: This article focuses on the Soviet-Cuban relations in terms of dependency theory, in the period to 1973. Distinctions are drawn between Cuba's relations with U.S. and the new dependency with the Russia. In the process it will be possible to grasp the specificity of dependence on the Russia. First, there is a discussion of the economic subordination of Cuba to the Russia. Emphasis is given on the role of sugar in Cuba's exports and the failure to develop a diversified and self reliant economy. Secondly, the adoption by Cuba of the Soviet model of planning, calculation, and organization in the economy. In the final section the history of the ideological and political differences between Havana and Moscow is dealt with. In addition, there is a survey of the abandoning of the "Cuban road" and the emergence of a new Soviet-Cuban ideological and diplomatic alliance against the rivals of the Russia, especially China. The Soviet ruling circles are motivated by the political and ideological uses of a Cuban proxy. Russia enjoyed a varying capacity to enforce policy changes on the Cuban government type of repressive society one finds in Russia. Cuban economic dependence has enabled the Russia to insert its own particular form of "socialism" in Cuba.*

Howard J. Wiarda. 1995. "Cuba, Castro, and the Post-Communist World." *Problems of Post-Communism*. 42(2): 29.

*Abstract: Focuses on the post-communist crisis in Cuba. Lack of fundamental loyalty to the communist ideology; Generational splits; Fidel Castro's non-preparation for leadership transition; Economic performance; Demoralization within the Cuban revolution; Human rights conditions; Survival of the state through repression and isolation.*

### *Spanish Resources*

Amnesty International . 1992. *Cuba: Silenciando Las Voces Disidentes*. Madrid: Editorial Amnistía Internacional EDAI.

Hugo Azcuy Henríquez. 1997. *Derechos Humanos: Una Aproximación a La Política*. La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales.

Esteban M. Beruvides. 1994. Cuba Y Su Presidio Político. Coral Gables, Fla., Estados Unidos de América: 12th Avenue Graphics.

Fidel Castro. 1990. *Cuba De Los Derechos Humanos*. Ciudad de La Habana, Cuba: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales.

María Luisa Guerrero. 1991. *Elena Mederos, Una Mujer Con Perfil Para La Historia*. Washington, D.C.; Miami, Fla.: Of Human Rights; Ediciones Universal.

Christopher Kean. 1992. *Diez Días En Cuba: Mensaje De La Disidencia a La Diáspora*. New York; Washington: Freedom House; Of Human Rights.

Mari Paz Martínez Nieto. 2001. *Son De Cuba*. Madrid: Libroslibres.

Jacobo Timerman. 1990. *Cuba Hoy, Y Después*. Barcelona: Muchnik Editores.

### Civil and Political Rights

Civil and Political Rights in Cuba have been limited in efforts to silence any dissent against the government. The subcategories in this section cover the 2003 Crackdown of dissidents and limitations on Religious Freedom.

#### *Civil and Political Rights*

1997. "Cuba." *Journal of Democracy*. 8(4): 184.

*Abstract: Presents an excerpt of a document by Cuban human rights activists relating to democracy called 'The Homeland Belongs to Us All,' which is a response to an official document published by the Cuban Communist Party in June 1997. Reason the Cuban authors of the document were arrested.*

1998. "People's Power and the Politburo." *New Internationalist*. (301): 28.

*Abstract: Examines the political structures in Cuba. Reference to a visit by Pope John Paul II to Cuba; Request of Pope Paul for religious freedom in Cuba; Function of socialist democracy in the country; Information on the Communist Party of Cuba (CPC).*

Haroldo Dilla Alfonso. 2002. "Cuba: The Changing Scenarios of Governability." *boundary 2*. 29(3): 55.

*Abstract: Focuses on governability of Cuba. Relation of power between ruled and rulers; Equilibrium between diverse types of social demands; Repression in Cuba.*

Alejandra Bronfman. 2002. "'En Plena Libertad Y Democracia': Negros Brujos and the Social Question, 1904-1919." *Hispanic American Historical Review*. 82(3): 549.

*Abstract: Offers important insights with regard to the uses of race in electoral politics, labor and education focusing on the uses and misuses of the myth of racial equality in Cuba. Overview of the problem of black criminality in the region; Details on the book written by lawyer Fernando Ortiz about criminology; Invocation of human rights in the country.*

Watch Americas Human Rights. 1994. *Cuba, Stifling Dissent in the Midst of Crisis*. New York, N.Y.: Human Rights Watch/Americas.

*Abstract: Discusses travel restrictions, arrests of democracy activists, prison conditions, and prohibition of human rights monitoring. This Human Rights Watch report considers the situation in 1993, arguing the severe economic crisis in Cuba is a major cause of the government's human rights violations.*

Joanne Mariner and Gretta Tovar Siebentritt. 1995. Cuba: Improvements without Reform. New York, N.Y.: Human Rights Watch/Americas.

*Abstract: Explains that even with some limited improvements, brought on by international pressure, structural changes in the law are required to ensure the lasting protection of human rights in Cuba. This 1995 report also offers recommendations to the Cuban government, U.S. government, and European Union.*

Mary Anastasia O'Grady. 2000. "Today's Cuba a Nicer Place? Ask Marital Lug." *Wall Street Journal - Eastern Edition*. 235(80): A15.

*Abstract: Focuses on Cuban political prisoner Marital Lug Fernandez; Charges against Fernandez; How prisoners are treated in Cuba based from a testimony of political prisoner Armando Valladares; Pattern of brutality and repression against political opposition in the country; Political activity of Fernandez.*

Gerardo Otero and Janice O'Bryan. 2002. "Cuba in Transition? The Civil Sphere's Challenge to the Castro Regime." *Latin American Politics & Society*. 44(4): 29.

*Abstract: Assesses how much the emergence of civil society and private market activities are challenging Cuba's ruling communist regime. Conceptualizing the civil sphere in transitions from state colonialism; Cuba in the 1990s; Organized opposition groups in Cuba; Religion and civil society.*

Laura Reiner. 1998. "Cuba: Doctors Imprisoned." *Lancet*. 351(9100): 441.

*Abstract: Considers the arrest in 1997 of Dr. Desi Mendoza Rivero in Cuba. His charges that the Cuban government did not address the public-health crisis in diagnosing dengue; His sentence for behavior that was politically opposed to the Cuban social system; The other Cuban health professionals who have been imprisoned; The physicians for Human Rights joining Amnesty International for the release of these prisoners; Contact point to write and protest.*

### 2003 Crackdown

2003. "Castro Cracks Down." *Economist*. 367(8319): 11.

*Abstract: Reports that while the world was distracted by the start of the war in Iraq, Cuban President Fidel Castro, a master of propaganda and repression, unleashed the harshest crackdown on dissent in Cuba since at least 1994. In summary trials, courts were handing out sentences of up to 28 years in prison to the 78 people arrested. They are charged with conspiring with the United States. Their crime is that they met some U.S. diplomats. The new crackdown suggests that Castro is more rattled than he has been letting on. Thanks mainly to the worldwide slump in tourism, Cuba's economy is again in the doldrums. And for the first time, his control has come under credible, if still largely symbolic, threat. Last year a new group, the Varela Project, named after a 19th-century Cuban patriot and of Christian-democratic inspiration, launched a petition to demand basic political freedoms. First, unlike most of the opposition, the movement is based in Cuba, not Miami. Second, it says it accepts the constitution and is committed to peaceful democratic change. The arrests are clearly aimed at smashing*

*this incipient challenge: many of the detainees were grassroots activists for the project, and 28 were independent journalists.*

2003. "Cuba." *Journal of Democracy*. 14(3): 185.

*Abstract: Reports on the statement of International Movement of Parliamentarians for Democracy condemning the arrest and conviction of democracy and human rights advocates in Cuba. Information on the arrests; Violation of the Universal Declaration of the Human Rights; Appeal for the Cuban government to respect its obligation to the declaration.*

2000. "Repression by Harassment." *Economist*. 354(8162): 38.

*Abstract: Focuses on the Cuban government crackdown on opposition groups and public protests, as of March 2000. Government response to criticism; Violence against and arrest of members of a human rights group in the town of Pedro Betancur; Background; Harassment as a tool of political repression; Political prisoners.*

Amnesty International. 2003. Cuba: "Essential Measures"? Human Rights Crackdown in the Name of Security.

*Abstract: This Amnesty International report covers the crackdown of dissidents in 2003. Since some positive development had been occurring prior to the crackdown, the report refers to the crackdown as surprising and alarming. It also calls for the release of the 75 individuals arrested in the crackdown, explaining the trial documents reveal no obvious criminal behavior. The report concludes with recommendations to the Cuban and U.S. governments.*

Geri Smith and Cristina Lindblad. 2003. "Why Fidel Picked This Moment to Crack Down." *Business week*. 3829): 59.

*Abstract: With the world's attention riveted on the fall of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, another long-reigning despot has been tightening his grip on the nation he has ruled for 44 years. Since mid-March, 2003 Cuba's Fidel Castro has rounded up 78 independent journalists, human rights activists, and democracy advocates. On Apr. 7, 2003 a kangaroo court handed down prison sentences of up to 28 years for 74 of the dissidents. The crackdown came as a surprise to those who thought the 76-year-old Castro was mellowing. Pockets of private enterprise have been allowed to spring up over the past decade, and a measure of glasnost has crept into society. The latest round of repression threatens to halt -- and even reverse -- the loosening of the U.S. embargo on trade with Cuba.*

### *Religious Freedom*

1992. "Cubans Fear Dependency." *Christian Century*. 109(27): 840.

*Abstract: Reports that efforts by Cuban churches to re-establish ties with their counterparts in the U.S. , though a symbol of growing religious freedoms, could also spell a new kind of trouble for Cuban religious groups, according to one of the island's church leaders. Oden Marichal, an Episcopal priest who serves as the rector of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Matanzas; Need for more faculty; Resistance to go outside the country to get them; Cuban President Fidel Castro; More.*

1993. "Keeping the Faith." *Economist*. 329(7832): 46.

*Abstract: Presents an overview of the current situation in Cuba. Open letter from the Cuban catholic bishops; Criticism of the government's monopoly of power; Deepening economic woes and resulting confusion and suffering; Fidel Castro's admittance of a need to change with the times; Impact of the collapse of the Soviet Union; Cuba's need to introduce market reforms; Castro's refusal to let individuals make their own economic decisions; Factors in Cubans' meek acceptance of decades of repression.*

I. Maust. 1991. "Freedoms Only for Show?" *Christianity Today*. 35(7): 64.

*Abstract: Investigates recent developments toward religious freedom in Cuba. New approval for the entry of large quantities of Scripture into the country; Beliefs of some that President Fidel Castro is only making surface changes due to Cuba's hosting of the upcoming Pan American Games; Status of Christianity in Cuba.*

Thomas C. Oden. 1994. "The Church Castro Couldn't Kill. (Cover Story)." *Christianity Today*. 38(5): 18.

*Abstract: Says that being a Christian in Cuba is a risky business and describes the emotion and tenacity of Cubans whose faith has not been extinguished by Fidel Castro's political repression. The current youth-led religious revival in Cuba; The house-church movement; Pablo, who explains what it's like to be a Christian in Cuba; Future status of the Cuban church.*

Jeff M. Sellers. 2002. "Freedom's Wedge." *Christianity Today*. 46(11): 100.

*Abstract: Examines the legal status of Christians in Cuba. Decline in Christian persecution in Cuba in the late 1990s; Government restrictions on religious activities; Growth of evangelical congregations and house churches.*

Margaret I. Short. 1993. Law and Religion in Marxist Cuba: A Human Rights Inquiry. Coral Gables, Fla.; New Brunswick: North-South Center, University of Miami; Distributed by Transaction Publishers.

*Abstract: Considers human rights and Cuban law, the religious and ideological foundations of Marxism-Leninism, and the current religious freedom situation. Short explores the historical developments of the last three decades and their effect on religion in Cuba. She concludes that repression of religious and other civil liberties is intrinsic to Cuba's code of law.*

Leslie Wirpsa. 1997. "Catholic Cubans Nurture New Freedoms. (Cover Story)." *National Catholic Reporter*. 33(33): 16.

*Abstract: Describes the role of the Catholic Church in Cuban society. Support for revolutionary practices in the 1950s; Closure of Catholic schools and expulsions of priests in the 1960s; Relaxation of official controls on religious practice since 1992; Reflections on political and economic ethics.*

## **Economic and Social Rights**

Sources within this section cover the economic and social rights of Cuba citizens. Main topics include health, education, and the economy.

2004. "Health Care in Cuba and the Manipulation of Humanitarian Imperatives." *Lancet*. 364(9438): 1007.

*Abstract: Reports on health care in Cuba and the manipulation of humanitarian imperatives. How in July 2004, restrictions on travel and remittances from the U.S. were tightened and U.S. firms were fined for unauthorized export of medicine; Reasons why the U.S embargo on Cuba has been modified repeatedly; Reaction to Cuba's health record; Reasons there are few non-governmental organizations active in Cuba today.*

Elizabeth M. Bertera. 2003. "Social Services for the Aged in Cuba." *International Social Work*. 46(3): 313.

*Abstract: Focuses on social services for the aged in Cuba. Health services for the aged; Aging of the population in Cuba.*

Susan Eckstein. 1997. "The Coming Crisis in Cuban Education." *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*. 4(1): 107.

*Abstract: Examines the problems associated with the education system in Cuba. Transformation of Cuba's education system since 1959; Areas emphasized in Cuba's education system; Overeducation of the country; Efforts of the Cuban government to curb overeducation problem.*

Richard Garfield and Sarah Santana. 1997. "The Impact of the Economic Crisis and the U.S. Embargo on Health in Cuba." *American Journal of Public Health*. 87(1): 15.

*Abstract: This paper examines the combined effects of a severe economic decline since 1989 and a tightening of the U.S. embargo in 1992 on health care in Cuba. Methods. Data from surveillance systems for nutrition, reportable diseases, and hospital diagnoses were reviewed. These sources were supplemented with utilization data from the national health system and interviews with health leaders. Results. Changes in Cuba include declining nutritional levels, rising rates of infectious diseases and violent death, and a deteriorating public health infrastructure. But despite these threats, mortality levels for children and women remain low. Instead, much of the health impact of the economic decline of Cuba has fallen on adult men and the elderly. Conclusions. To be consistent with international humanitarian law, embargoes must not impede access to essential humanitarian goods. Yet this embargo has raised the cost of medical supplies and food. Rationing, universal access to primary health services, a highly educated population, and preferential access to scarce goods for women and children help protect most Cubans from what otherwise might have been a health disaster.*

Raúl Herrera-Valdés and Miguel Almaguer-López. 2005. "Strategies for National Health Care Systems and Centers in the Emerging World: Central America and the Caribbean—the Case of Cuba." *Kidney international*. 68(s98): S66.

*Abstract: Strategies for national health care systems and centers in the emerging world: Central America and the Caribbean. The case of Cuba. Over 40% of the 76 million people in Central America and the Caribbean live in poverty with no safety net. Communicable and noncommunicable diseases significantly impact morbidity and mortality, and a tendency toward aging suggests increasing prevalence of chronic conditions. Among factors related to renal diseases: obesity is an epidemic among the near-poor; prevalence of diabetes mellitus is 6% to 8%; and hypertension is 8% to 30%. The region's racial-ethnic composition—associated with depressed socioeconomic conditions—is comparable to U.S. minorities showing greater chronic renal disease (CRD) rates than those registered in Central America and the Caribbean, which suggests that this region may be among the world's most seriously affected by CRD. This is a reality masked by lack of health care coverage. Health policies generally have not prioritized human resource development, and training is biased toward curative care instead of prevention. Nephrologists are less than 20 per million population in most countries. Health care infrastructures are poor,*

*lacking the primary care facilities charged with prevention. Cuba shares economic limitations with its neighbors but is one of the region's least socially stratified countries, with a universal, free, and public health care system emphasizing primary health care and prevention. Human resource development has resulted in 59.6 physicians per 10,000 inhabitants and a family physician program covering the whole population. A national renal diseases program incorporates preventive strategies at all care levels. Nevertheless, early detection of patients with CRD remains a challenge in the Cuban context. In Central America and the Caribbean, prevention is the key to reducing medical, social, and economic costs of renal disease.*

Irving Louis Horowitz and Jaime Suchlicki. 1996. "Repression Forever?" *Freedom Review*. 27(2): 18.

*Abstract: Focuses on Fidel Castro and social conditions in Cuba. Persistence of Castro's dictatorship; Military unhappiness; Opposition to the Castro regime; Discussion on Cuba's monetary system; Cuba's adoption of the worse features of the Chinese way of economic openness and status repression.*

Demetrius S. Iatridis. 1990. "Cuba's Health Care Policy: Prevention and Active Community Participation." *Social Work*. 35(1): 29.

*Abstract: In Cuba, health care is considered a human right for all citizens; health care is therefore a national priority. Cuba's health policy emphasizes prevention, primary care, services in the community, and the active participation of citizens. These emphases have produced an impressively high ranking on major health indicators, despite economic handicaps. The Cuban experience demonstrates the influence of ideological commitment and policymaking on the provision of health care and challenges the assumption that high-quality care for all citizens requires massive financial investment. The evolution of the Cuban health care system since the revolution thus has implications for the U.S. health care system; specifically, it suggests that the equitable distribution of health care services in the United States requires a national health insurance and service delivery system.*

Deborah Klein. 2004. "Education as Social Revolution." *Independent School*. 63(3): 38.

*Abstract: Focuses on the success of the Literacy Campaign of Cuban President Fidel Castro in 1961. Participants in the Literacy Campaign of 1961; Reasons for the success of the campaign; Education standards and initiatives in Cuba.*

Gowri Parameswaran. 2004. "The Cuban Response to the Aids Crisis: Human Rights Violation or Just Plain Effective?" *Dialectical Anthropology*. 28(3/4): 289.

*Abstract: The article comment on Cuban response to the AIDS crisis. Cuba has one of the lowest AIDS infection rates in the world. This is astounding when compared to the other nations of the Caribbean islands, which have had on an average, AIDS infection rates of 6-8 %. Since its very inception after the Cuban revolution of 1954, health was declared as one of the major priorities of the new communist state. The health care system was and is still based on the principles of equality and social justice.*

A. Dickey Richard. 2003. "Economically Compromised Health Care in Cuba." *Endocrinologist*. 13(4): 314.

*Abstract: Health care and the practice of endocrinology in Cuba have been severely affected by economic limitations there. This was witnessed by physicians on a recent physician group visit to Cuba. Although the attitudes and biases of the Cuban people themselves have affected healthcare practices and the care of patients in Cuba, health care in Cuba has been even more significantly impacted by the effects of the complex political changes and adverse economic conditions in Cuba, especially over the past decade.*

Nancy Scheper-Hughes. 1993. "Aids, Public Health, and Human Rights in Cuba." *Lancet*. 342(8877): 965.

*Abstract: Discusses the control of AIDS in Cuba. National program to contain AIDS; Factors contribution to the control of AIDS; Program's violation of the privacy and freedom of seropositive people.*

Mervyn Susser. 1993. "Health as a Human Right: An Epidemiologist's Perspective on the Public Health." *American Journal of Public Health*. 83(3): 418.

*Abstract: The modern idea of health as a human right is examined, as it evolved from the 18th century, in terms of its origins, its essential content, and 20th-century attempts at implementation. Equity for social groups is seen as a guiding principle. Two attempts at implementation, in Britain and in Cuba, are examined for their effects on equity in health service and in health states. The British National Health Service achieved equity between social classes in services but failed to achieve it in health states (as measured by mortality). Deficiencies in commitment to public health services, it is argued, contributed largely to this failure. The Cuban experiment appears to have moved beyond equity solely in services and toward equity in health states. This success reflects an overall Cuban commitment to the public health. Two important elements of that commitment are, first, continuous evaluation with flexible response and, second, community involvement.*

Julio Carranza Valdés; Juan Valdés Paz and Raúl J. Rosales. 2004. "Institutional Development and Social Policy in Cuba: "the Special Period"." *Journal of International Affairs*. 58(1): 175.

*Abstract: Analyzes the Cuban institutional development in its relation with the social policy of the revolution, particularly during the so-called special period between 1990 and 2000. Flaws of the institutional order in the late 1980s; Events which added to the structural problems of the Cuban economy; Impact of the decentralizing measures and the external financial flows; Components of social spending in the 1990s.*

Annalee Yassi; Pedro Mas; Mariano Bonet; Robert B. Tate; Niurys Fernandez; Jerry Spiegel and Mayilee Perez. 1999. "Applying an Ecosystem Approach to the Determinants of Health in Centro Habana." *Ecosystem Health*. 5(1): 3.

*Abstract: The difficult economic times that Cuba has had to face have taken a considerable toll on its urban ecosystems, with data suggesting that indicators of health, the environment, and social services have been deteriorating. This has been particularly evident in Centro Habana, a municipality with the highest population density in the country. More than half the population was without daily access to potable water, waste disposal was insufficient, overcrowding was serious, disease vectors were prevalent, and rates of various infectious as well as noncommunicable diseases and injuries were highest in the country. To improve the situation, the municipality requested help from the National Institute for Hygiene Epidemiology and Microbiology (INHEM) to determine the best use of scarce resources to improve health. INHEM performed an ecological descriptive study and conducted focus groups in five communities to assess perceptions of health, social, and environmental factors, followed by a household survey. INHEM then engaged collaborators at the University of Manitoba to assist in developing a framework, analyzing the data, and planning and undertaking the evaluation requested. Maximum likelihood factor analysis was used to reduce the dimensionality of the data. The perception data were then merged with the ecological level health and environmental data to ascertain the relationship between these two data sources and determine which indicators might be useful for an intervention analysis. The perception results indicated that the greatest community concern was quality of housing, but that the risk perception results were independent of ecological data on morbidity, mortality, and basic sanitation indicators. Based on this conclusion, it was decided to*

*use a combined qualitative and quantitative approach to evaluate actual and potential interventions, using the driving force-pressure-state-exposure-effects-action (DPSEEA) framework.*

## International Perspectives

This section covers International Recognition of Cuba's human rights record. States, non-governmental organizations, and inter-governmental groups have pressured the Cuban government to change its policies. U.S.-Cuba relations, including the U.S. embargo continues to be an important yet contentious influence on the Cuban economy and human rights. This subcategory focuses largely on the issues surrounding U.S.-Cuba relations and the embargo.

### *International Recognition*

2000. "Cuba." *Journal of Democracy*. 11(3): 183.

*Abstract: Presents an excerpt from the remarks of Czech vice-minister of foreign affairs Martin Palous when he introduced a draft resolution on Cuba at the 56th session of the United Nation Commission on Human Rights. Respect for elementary standards of the international human rights instruments; Concern about the situation in Cuba.*

Cuba Section of Human Rights Watch Website.

*Abstract: This site includes a variety of resources produced by Human Rights Watch regarding human rights in Cuba, including background information, annual reports, and press releases. Particular attention is given to U.S. / Cuba relations.*

Claudio Grossman. Presentation of the 2000 Annual Report of the IACHR to the Committee on Juridical and Political Affairs of the OAS Permanent Council. Washington DC. 26 April 2001. <http://www.cidh.org/Disursos/04.26.01eng.htm>.

*Abstract: Address by the President of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights within the OAS. Cuba was highlighted in the annual report for lack of free elections, restrictions on judicial guarantees, and limitations on freedom of expression.*

Union European. 2004. Declaration by the Presidency on Behalf of the European Union on Human Rights in Cuba. [http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/cfsp/80454.pdf](http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/cfsp/80454.pdf).

*Abstract: This press release is just one of several examples of the European Union's attention to the lack of civil and political freedoms for Cuban citizens.*

Jean Kirkpatrick. 2003. "The United Nation Vs. Human Rights." *NPQ: New Perspectives Quarterly*. 20(3): 25.

*Abstract: Deals with several human rights problems being faced by the United Nations Commission of Human Rights which were discussed during the commission's meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, from March 16 to April 26, 2003. Discussion on the issue that the U.S. was denied a seat and a vote on the commission in 2002;*

*Response of the commission on the human rights violation of Cuban government; Occurrence of human rights violation in other countries that received no actions from the commission.*

Joe W. Pitts III and David Weisbrodt. 1993. "Major Developments at the U.N. Commission on Human Rights in 1992." *Human Rights Quarterly*. 15(1): 122.

*Abstract: The article reports on major developments in the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) for 1992. It is informed that the forty-eighth session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights was held at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland from 27 January to 7 March 1992. The Commission continued its debate over the enhancement of its effectiveness, in which the ideological divide between East and West largely dissolved. The Commission took a number of actions, and began a number of new initiatives. The Commission adopted eighty-three resolutions, and nineteen decisions. The most significant resolutions dealt with Afghanistan, Albania, Cuba, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Guatemala, Haiti, Iran, Iraq, the Israeli-occupied territories including Palestine, Myanmar (Burma), Romania, South Africa, and Western Sahara. However, it is opined that the Commission failed to give adequate attention to the human rights situations in a number of countries. Further, it is informed that the membership of the Commission was expanded in 1992 from forty-three members to fifty-three members.*

Armando Valladares and United States. Dept. Of State. Office of Public Communication. Editorial. 1989. Cuba's Human Rights Abuses under the U.N. Spotlight. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Office of Public Communication, Editorial Division.

*Abstract: Address by Armando Valladares, former Cuban political prisoner and U.S. Representative to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, to the Subcommittees on Western Hemisphere Affairs and Human Rights and International Organizations of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. He stressed the influence of international pressure on Castro's behavior, and that the continued U.N. spotlight on the human rights abuses in Cuba is necessary for real change to occur.*

#### *U.S.-Cuba Relations*

1994. H.R. 2229, Free Trade with Cuba Act. Washington: U.S. G.P.O.: For sale by the U.S. G.P.O., Supt. of Docs., Congressional Sales Office.

James C. Cason. 2003. "The Human Rights Situation in Present-Day Cuba." *Human Rights Review*. 4(4): 46.

*Abstract: Presents a speech by James C. Cason, a career foreign service officer, delivered at the Cuban Transition Project, April 7, 2003. Political developments that affect Cubans and U.S. policy; Impact of U.S. policies on Cuba; Difference between the approach used by human rights monitors and political party leaders in promoting democratic reform.*

Richard Garfield and Sarah Santana. 1997. "The Impact of the Economic Crisis and the Us Embargo on Health in Cuba." *American Journal of Public Health*. 87(1): 15.

*Abstract: This paper examines the combined effects of a severe economic decline since 1989 and a tightening of the U.S. embargo in 1992 on health care in Cuba. Methods. Data from surveillance systems for nutrition, reportable diseases, and hospital diagnoses were reviewed. These sources were supplemented with utilization data*

*from the national health system and interviews with health leaders. Results. Changes in Cuba include declining nutritional levels, rising rates of infectious diseases and violent death, and a deteriorating public health infrastructure. But despite these threats, mortality levels for children and women remain low. Instead, much of the health impact of the economic decline of Cuba has fallen on adult men and the elderly. Conclusions. To be consistent with international humanitarian law, embargoes must not impede access to essential humanitarian goods. Yet this embargo has raised the cost of medical supplies and food. Rationing, universal access to primary health services, a highly educated population, and preferential access to scarce goods for women and children help protect most Cubans from what otherwise might have been a health disaster.*

Fiona Godlee. 1993. "U.S. Embargo Causing Crisis in Cuba." *BMJ: British Medical Journal*. 307(6903): 521.

*Abstract: Focuses on the strength of trade embargo against by the United States. Discussions on the shortage of supply on types of medical equipments; Descriptions on the effects of the Torricelli Act on trade; Emphasis on human rights in the condition.*

Anthony F. Kirkpatrick. 1996. "Role of the USA in Shortage of Food and Medicine in Cuba." *Lancet*. 348(9040): 1489.

*Abstract: Discusses the effect of how United States government policies contribute to a shortage of medicines and medical equipment in Cuba. The Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 and the Helms-Burton Act of 1996; U.S. jurisdiction over medical products; U.S. embargo imposing significant restrictions on Cuba acquiring non- U.S. products; The inclusion of foods in the U.S. trade embargo; The opinion of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States.*

Barry R. McCaffrey. 2002. "Challenges to U.S. National Security." *Armed Forces Journal International*. 139(10): 12.

*Abstract: Assesses the diplomatic policies of Cuba and the U.S. Definition of the problem; Violations of human rights in Cuba; Status of the Cuban economy after the fall of Soviet Union.*

Wayne S. Smith. 1990. "Washington and Havana: Time for Dialogue." *World Policy Journal*. 7(3): 557.

*Abstract: This article discusses the reluctance of U.S. President George W. Bush to deal with the Cuban government. One reason for the U.S. administration's reluctance is its apparent expectation that Cuban President Fidel Castro is not likely to endure for long. Castro's popularity has waned as economic conditions in Cuba have failed to improve, but he still enjoys wide support. Although disgruntlement is on the rise, it is a far cry from anything resembling active opposition. A number of human rights groups have sprung up, but brave though their efforts, they can count on the active support of only a few hundred people. The great majority of Cubans seem prepared to trust Castro to make them. For all its shortcomings, the Castro regime has provided them with universal education and excellent medical care. And despite shortages, Cubans tend to be better fed and housed than the masses of citizens in most neighbouring countries. The fact remains that Cuban policies, especially its foreign policy, have changed. The Cuban leadership's hope of negotiating with the U.S. has been at least one factor helping to bring about those changes. It is no mystery why Cuba's willingness to liberalize may be determined in very large part by the state of its relations with the U.S.*

Affairs United States. Congress. House. Committee on Foreign. 1992. Cuban Democracy Act of 1992. Washington, D.C.: U.S. G.P.O.

Rights United States. Congress. House. Committee on International Relations. Subcommittee on International Operations and Human and Hemisphere United States. Congress. House. Committee on International Relations. Subcommittee on the Western. 1997. Human Rights Violations in Castro's Cuba. Washington: U.S. G.P.O.: For sale by the U.S. G.P.O., Supt. of Docs., Congressional Sales Office.

Hemisphere United States. Congress. House. Committee on International Relations. Subcommittee on the Western. 1995. Cuba and U.S. Policy: Hearing before the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere of the Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives, One Hundred Fourth Congress, First Session, February 23, 1995. Washington: U.S. G.P.O.: For sale by the U.S. G.P.O., Supt. of Docs., Congressional Sales Office.

Relations United States. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign. 1999. Castro's Crackdown in Cuba. Washington: U.S. G.P.O.: For sale by the U.S. G.P.O., Supt. of Docs., Congressional Sales Office.