



NAMIBIA- CUBA FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION

P. O. Box.6056

Ausspannplatz Windhoek

Namibia

Contact No: 0812857376

NAMIBIA CUBA FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION (NAMCUFA) SUBMISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS. CUBA HUMAN RIGHTS, SOLIDARITY AND JUSTICE

INTRODUCTION

The Namibia Cuba Friendship Association (NAMCUFA) is a broad-based, democratic and voluntary Association founded by the freedom-loving Namibians and is based upon the principles of international solidarity, peace and friendship. Its main purpose is to promote solidarity and friendship between the peoples of Namibia and Cuba, to strengthen and consolidate the historic bonds forged during the struggle for Namibia independence.

The relation of Cuba and the people of Africa and that of Namibia in particular started in 1960 at a historic UN General Assembly where the Commandant Fidel Castro Ruz gave a long speech showing his sympathy to the African liberation movement. This relationship grows throughout the hard time of Namibia fighting for independence and self-determination.

CUBAN SOLIDARITY

During the liberation struggle the Cuban people supported our just course to the extent of shedding their precious blood on the African Continent. Cuba did all that not for material gain. The Cuban people are driven by the powerful value of human solidarity that the people must work together and sacrifice together to develop themselves and to improve the lives of all, rather than to benefit only the rich and powerful few. These values are not only applied in Cuba for the Cuban but they rather extend it to the neediest around the world.

Cuba's commitment to human solidarity and to the sovereignty and dignity of peoples led naturally to its international solidarity with peoples who were struggling against colonialism, oppression, apartheid and poverty.

We will never forget the hundreds of thousands of Cuban citizens who participated in the struggles of their African brothers and sisters for independence from colonial domination and against apartheid.

It is beyond doubt that the presence of the heroic Cuban forces, fighting and sacrificing alongside of SWAPO against the South African army in Angola, was decisive in achieving our Independence. Cuban Internationalists came to the rescue and saved some of the innocent children and civilians in the barbaric attack in Cassinga Camp on 4 May 1978 were many civilians, many of those were children lost their lives.

Cuba gave refuge to the hundreds of Namibian children who were victims of the barbaric attack of the South African army at Cassinga. Cuba raised, nurtured and educated them in their own school and in different Cuban universities, which prepared them for their current roles in Namibian nation-building.

Cuba has also provided medical and other professional tertiary education to countless tens or hundreds of thousands of students from the developing world, including Namibia.

Over the past five decades, Cuban international solidarity has set an example for humanity. Tens of thousands of Cuban doctors have worked or are presently working in underserved developing countries. Hundreds, if not thousands, of Cuban doctors have worked in Namibia since independence, along with other experts.

Brigades of Cuban volunteer doctors have helped in many countries hit by natural disasters and to battle disease outbreaks.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN GENERAL.

Cuba advances in its efforts to achieve the fullest enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all its citizens.

Cuba has maintained extensive cooperation with the human rights mechanisms that are applied on universal and non-discriminatory bases. It has ratified 44 international instruments on human rights out of the 61 that are internationally recognized.

The improvement of the country's legal and institutional framework for updating the economic and social model has been deepened, on the basis of preserving and strengthening social justice and solidarity.

Since 2019, with the approval of the new Constitution of the Republic, a broad legislative update has taken place in the country, which has reinforced the treatment and protection of human rights.

The new Magna Carta significantly broadens the catalog of rights and reaffirms the universal, indivisible and interdependent nature of all human rights.

Among the aspects that reinforce the protection and promotion of human rights is the reconfiguration of the equality clause and the principle of non-discrimination by incorporating new figures or categories that are vulnerable or susceptible to discrimination such as age, disability, orientation sexual, gender, gender identity, ethnic origin, territorial origin.

The protection of women is reinforced, equal rights in all areas in relation to men, ensures the exercise of their sexual and reproductive rights and protects them from gender violence in any of its manifestations and spaces.

Constitutional rank is conferred on the prohibition of torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, and forced disappearance of persons.

New rights are introduced, such as: the right to access public information and to receive truthful, objective and timely information, the right to water, healthy and adequate food, adequate housing and a safe and healthy habitat, the right to a healthy and balanced environment.

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND PEACEFUL GATHERING.

The Constitution of the Republic expressly recognizes in its article 56 the rights of assembly, demonstration and association, for which the State provides and guarantees the necessary means for such purposes.

Law No. 54 of 1985, "Associations Law" establishes the requirements for the recognition and registration of associations, which freely exercise their functions, elect their representatives and managers from among their members, and maintain collaborative and exchange with government authorities at all levels.

The guarantees provided by Cuban laws to protect these freedoms include severe punitive measures for all those people and public officials who seek to unlawfully violate the freedoms of free expression of thought, association, peaceful assembly, demonstration, complaint and petition, as provided by the Penal Code in its articles 291 and 292.

The activities and meetings called by the associations are carried out without interference from the state authorities. Public institutions and their officials have the duty, and they fulfill it, to support the activities, meetings, assemblies and processes in general carried out by the associations.

FREEDOM OF RELIGION.

Cuba promotes religious freedom of religions.

The Cuban Revolution, since 1959, has respected all churches and religious beliefs, without any discrimination.

Article 57 of the Constitution establishes that every person has the right to profess or not religious beliefs, to change them and to practice the religion of his choice, with due respect for others and in accordance with the law.

In Cuba, those behaviors related to any type of discrimination based on religious beliefs are prohibited.

The guarantees of freedom of religion and the fight against intolerance, discrimination and violence based on religion have penal protection.

More than 1,850 religious organizations and institutions and fraternal associations function in Cuba, whose membership reaches more than 1,500,000 people.

The Cuban State maintains cordial and respectful relations with the ecclesiastical authorities of the different faiths present in the country; and has provided all the necessary facilities for these institutions to carry out their activities in the country.

ELECTIONS

Contrary to what the large disinformation media try to make believe, in Cuba periodic elections are held in which the people have a high level of participation.

One of the first laws approved after the entry into force of the new Constitution was Law No. 127 of 2019 “Electoral Law”, which increases the protection of the right to participate in the conduct of public affairs.

All citizens, with legal capacity to do so, have the right to participate in periodic elections, plebiscites and popular referendums.

In Cuba, the vote, in addition to being voluntary, is free, equal, direct and secret

In the Cuban electoral process, all citizens have equal access opportunities to the highest public positions, based on their abilities and merits and not depending on their economic or financial capacity.

Civil society participation includes the right of mass and trade union organizations to elect, nominate and postulate candidates.

The direct nomination of those nominated by the people is applied, not through the party system.

In elections, candidates are valued on their merits and not on the course of media campaigns between political parties, or on the financial support of large corporations.

Electoral processes in Cuba are not big media contests between political parties, in which, to obtain more votes, candidates make promises that they later quickly forget or deliberately break.

Elected representatives are not committed to big business and donors for having financed their election campaigns. Their commitment is limited only to their constituents, who can revoke them at any time, in accordance with Law 135 on the Revocation of Those Elected to the Bodies of People's Power.

The existence of a single party in the Cuban system is the result of historical and contemporary factors.

The Communist Party of Cuba, unlike other countries, is not an electoral party. It does not campaign, nor present candidacies, nor participate in any way in the electoral

process.

Cuba does not have a “presidential system”. In Cuba, as in many countries, the President is elected indirectly. He is elected from among the deputies who, in turn, are elected by the citizens.

RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Cuban democratic system is based on the active participation of the people in the exercise and control of the organs of power of the State and the Government.

In Cuba, all citizens have equal access opportunities to the highest public positions. This does not depend on their economic or financial capacity, nor on the support of large corporations or the course of media campaigns between parties.

The accountability of the constituency delegate to his constituents is one of the effective ways to favor the active participation of the population in controlling the management of the government and elected representatives.

An eloquent example of participation in the conduct of public affairs was the process of elaboration, consultation and popular ratification of the new Constitution of the Republic.

The draft Constitution was submitted to a very extensive popular consultation process (133,681 meetings, 8,945,521 participants, 1,706,872 interventions and 783,174 proposals),

60% of the project underwent modifications, from the consultation process.

The Constitution was ratified in a popular referendum through the favorable vote of 86.85% of the voters.

In addition, in 2022 the Family Code project was submitted to popular consultation, in which more than 6,480,000 Cubans participated. As a result of this process, 48% of the general text was modified.

The Cuban Family Code was the first of its kind in the world to be submitted to a referendum process.

The Code was approved by 66.85% of the 6,269,427 Cubans (74.12% of the electoral roll) who exercised their right to vote.

Despite Cuba adhering to human rights issues for its citizens, the USA government continue to intensify measures and declare unprecedented economic embargo against Cuba.

The application for more than six decades of the US economic, commercial and financial blockade constitutes a serious and systematic violation of the human rights of the Cuban people. This genocidal policy has been significantly intensified in the last five years, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The United Nations General Assembly has passed resolution every year since 1992 demanding the end of the U.S. economic blockade on Cuba but no action is taken.

CONCLUSION

The people of Cuba has stood firm in their struggle, having to deal with the pandemic and at the same time have to face intensified policy of economic blockade. Hence, we call for an immediate end of this barbaric embargo and any terrorism act against Cuba.

We denounce in the strongest terms the acts of violence that are promoted and carried out by criminal elements against Cuba

We strongly denounce the disinformation and discredit campaign articulated from Washington, faced with these maneuvers and the attempts to project an image of instability.

We want the absolute and immediate end of the US blockade against because is a violation of human right of the Cuban people

We urge all the peace loving people of the world to stand together and call for the immediate lifting of the economic, commercial and financial blockade of the United States, which is the main obstacle to the development and well-being of the Cuban people.