

**Prepared testimony by Maria C. Werlau
Executive Director of Cuba Archive / Free Society Project, Inc.
before the U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs
Subcommittee on Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations
hearing on “The Communist Cuban regime’s disregard for human rights”
December 11, 2024**

Since January 1st, 1959, for almost 66 years, the Cuban regime has committed egregious violations of, essentially, all human rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: of the right to life, freedom of thought, opinion, and expression, peaceful assembly and association, movement, conscience and religion, free choice of employment, just conditions of work, and due process of law, as well as to periodic and genuine elections, private property, privacy, forming trade unions, and more.

Many of these violations meet the definition of “crimes against humanity,” which has yet to be codified in a dedicated treaty of international law, but that is generally understood as inhuman acts directed against a civilian population deliberately committed knowingly by a government against its own subjects and characterized by their widespread or systematic nature, often involving state or organizational policy.¹

The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, of 1998,² which reflects the consensus among the international community, provides a list that includes the following crimes against humanity that committed systematically by the Cuban Communist regime: murder; enslavement; deportation or forcible transfer of population; imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty; torture; persecution against identifiable groups based on political, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, or gender grounds; enforced disappearance of persons; apartheid; and other inhumane acts intentionally causing great suffering or serious injury to body or mental or physical health (such as forced labor and indoctrination of minors, family separation, denial of medical care and housing, deliberate impoverishment, and others). For reasons of space, I will focus on just a few.

I. Violations of the right to life.

Cuban victims of death and disappearance are estimated in the tens of thousands, but are in the many hundreds of thousands when accounting for the Cuban Communist regime’s numerous international armed interventions and brazen subversion of democracies in several continents and, in particular, in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Cuba Archive, the non-profit organization I co-founded in 2001, is developing a comprehensive record of the cost in lives of the Cuban revolution on a case-by-case basis, which is available in real time in an online database.³ Through December 7, 2024 we had documented 8,172 individual cases of death or disappearance attributed to agents of the Cuban State. We believe that the actual number is many times higher, but field work and access to official records is impossible in totalitarian Cuba

¹ See “Crimes Against Humanity,” Definitions of Genocide and Related Crimes, Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, United Nations.

² The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court is the international treaty that founded the Court and establishes its governing framework. Adopted at the Rome Conference on 17 July 1998, it entered into force on 1 July 2002, thereby creating the International Criminal Court (ICC). The United States is not a member.

³ Database of Deaths and Disappearances, CubaArchive.org/database.

and enhanced documentation efforts are not possible with our minimal resources. The undercounting is particularly extreme in several categories including extrajudicial killings, deaths in prison, and the murder of civilians attempting to flee.

The Cuban regime's open disregard for human life continues in full display and, over six decades, has impacted not just Cubans but also citizens of many countries. 8 U.S. citizens have been executed by firing squad, 11 otherwise killed extrajudicially, 1 forcibly disappeared, and 8 killed in terrorist attacks sponsored or supported by Cuba (including Frank Connor,⁴ father of Joseph Connor, a witness at this hearing).

Mass firing squad executions in 1959 into the 1960s helped consolidate the Communist regime through sheer terror and effectively crushed the resistance.⁵ Since the late 1990s, there has been an unofficial moratorium on applying capital punishment, but the Penal Code establishes the death penalty delivered by firing squad for many causes including a very expansive definition of acts against "the security, independence, or integrity of the state" and the socialist order.⁶

The fact is that the Cuban regime has found and continues to find many ways to kill.

To date, Cuba Archive has documented 1,324 extrajudicial killings (actual or suspected) since January 1, 1959. Just this past November 30th, 30-year old political prisoner Manuel Guillén was beaten to death at the Combinado del Este prison of Havana, reported, as usual, as a suicide by hanging. His body showed clear signs of a brutal beating. Guillén was serving six years in prison for having filmed and distributed videos of nationwide mass demonstrations of July 11, 2021; he had refused to work for State Security within the prison.⁷

At least 13 political opponents have died since 2011 in circumstances suspected as extrajudicial killings, including Cuba's two main opposition leaders, Laura Pollán,⁸ of the Ladies in White, in 2011 and Oswaldo Payá,⁹ of the Christian Liberation Movement, in 2012.

171 extrajudicial killings have ensued in exit attempts from the national territory. In Cuba, it is a crime to leave without prior government authorization and Article 59 of the Penal Code punishes attempts to do so with years of prison,¹⁰ in violation of Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.¹¹ But, it is also punished with death. Since the start of the Communist regime, Cuban authorities have historically shot at, sunk vessels by ramming or throwing sandbags from small aircraft, and used other means of violence to prevent citizens from "escaping." These acts have been

⁴ "Frank Thomas Connor," <https://cubaarchive.org/database/?caseid=1324> ; and "U.S. citizens killed or disappeared by Cuba's communist regime, 1959 to date," May 1, 2022, Work-in-progress, Cuba Archive, <https://cubaarchive.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/U.S.-citizens-updated-5.1.2022-1.pdf>

⁵ Cuba Archive has 3,083 firing squad executions, of which 2,737 occurred in 1959-1969, the first ten years of the revolution.

⁶ Ley 151/2022 "Código Penal" (GOC-2022-861-O93), Asamblea Nacional del Poder Popular, Gaceta Oficial No. 93 Ordinaria de 1ro de septiembre de 2022, Gaceta Oficial de la República de Cuba, Ministerio de Justicia.

⁷ "Manuel Jesús Guillén Esplugas," <https://cubaarchive.org/database/?caseid=11756>

⁸ "Laura Pollán Toledo," <https://cubaarchive.org/database/?caseid=207>.

⁹ "Oswaldo Payá Sardiñas," <https://cubaarchive.org/database/?caseid=430>.

¹⁰ This violates Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that states: "Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country."

¹¹ Art. 13. "Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country."

perpetrated on defenseless individuals of all ages, including dozens of minors. Several massacres are well documented; the latest occurred in October 2022 on the northern coast of Cuba's Pinar del Rio province, when Cuba's Border Guard rammed a vessel carrying 23 people and killed eight persons, including the 2-year old child Elizabeth Meizoso.¹²

At least 30 Cuban citizens have been sentenced and put to death by firing squad for attempting to leave the country "illegally," including:¹³ in 1963, three Protestant ministers forcibly repatriated after fleeing by boat to Anguilla Key, Bahamas; in 1981, three brothers, ages 19 to 25, captured in a Special troops raid of the Vatican Embassy in Havana, where they had sought asylum;¹⁴ in 2003, three young men who attempted to hijack a passenger ferry to escape Cuba.

Cuba also has a nearly identical version of the Berlin Wall and lasting more than twice as long,¹⁵ preventing citizens from reaching the U.S. naval base in Guantánamo. Barbed wire, high fences, mine fields, watch towers, dogs, and armed sharpshooters with orders to fire were complemented in the 1990s with a sea wall at Guantánamo Bay. The sea and land wall have taken hundreds, perhaps thousands, of victims who've lost their lives or limbs, eyesight, or paid with years of prison.¹⁶ This intentional and systematic killing of unarmed citizens attempting to escape their country arguably fits the definition of the crime of genocide.

II. Forced labor / trafficking in persons of exported temporary workers, mostly in medical missions.¹⁷

My personal involvement in this issue is extensive and especially based on many direct interviews with doctors and other workers who have served in Cuba's international missions. In 2009, I began to earnestly investigate and denounce this as a unique form of modern slavery in violation of numerous

¹² "Elizabeth Meizoso," <https://cubaarchive.org/database/?caseid=11477>; "Nos partieron la lancha al medio: Hablan desde Cuba sobrevivientes del hundimiento de lancha en Bahía Honda, America TeVé, Oct. 31, 2022." "Eso no fue accidente, fue asesinato", 14yMedio, Nov. 1, 2022. Also see "Extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances of civilians attempting to flee Cuba," op. cit.

¹³ "Extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances of civilians attempting to flee Cuba," Cuba Archive, November 21, 2022, <https://cubaarchive.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Killings-and-forced-disappearances-in-exit-attempts.pdf>. Also see individual case records at [CubaArchive.org/database](https://cubaarchive.org/database).

¹⁴ [CubaArchive.org/database](https://cubaarchive.org/database) (all records have the sources of the information). Also see "Submission For the Universal Periodic Review of Cuba of May 2018," NGO Submission for the United Nations Human Rights Council, Oct. 5, 2017, prepared by Cuba Archive / Free Society Project and co-submitted with Cubalex and The Human Rights Foundation Center for Law and Democracy, <https://cubaarchive.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Right-to-Life-UNHRC-UPR.pdf>

¹⁵ The Berlin Wall existed from August 1961 to November 1989. Over 100,000 citizens of the German Democratic Republic, GDR (Communist Germany) tried to escape across the inner-German border or the Berlin Wall between 1961 and 1988. More than 600 were shot and killed by GDR border guards or otherwise died during their escape attempt. At the Berlin Wall alone, at least 100 were shot and killed, accidentally killed, or killed themselves when they were caught. ("Victims of the Wall," https://www.berlin.de/mauer/en/history/victims-of-the-wall/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

¹⁶ Cuba's Berlin Wall still stands: killings and disappearances of persons fleeing towards the U.S. base at Guantanamo," Cuba Archive, Nov. 10, 2014, <https://cubaarchive.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Cuba-Berlin-Wall-Still-Stands-11.10.2014.pdf>

¹⁷ This section primarily takes, at times literally, from a report written by the author from extensive investigations since 2009: "Overview of Trafficking in Persons in Cuba's Medical Brigades," Free Society Project / Cuba Archive, Nov. 15, 2023,

<https://cubaarchive.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Overview-of-TIP-in-Cubas-Medical-Brigades-11.2023.pdf>

international standards and agreements, including the Trafficking in Persons Protocol (2003).¹⁸ In 2010, I published the first of several academic papers that have followed, presented at a conference in July 2010,¹⁹ and an Opinion Editorial in *The Wall Street Journal*.²⁰ In 2016, I testified in this Committee on the trafficking²¹ Over the years, the international community has become increasingly aware that this is a practice similar to slavery, which is universally accepted as a “crime against humanity” when committed by public officials against any person.

In fact, the Cuban government runs a global business that exports Cuban workers as “commodities” and generates the largest official source of revenues of the Cuban State. Doctors, nurses, medical technicians, teachers, sports trainers, musicians, entertainers, sailors, I.T. specialists, military experts, repressors, scientists, agronomists, architects, construction workers, geologists, tobacco rollers, and others from myriad fields are sent on “internationalist missions” of 2 to 3 years. They can be called into duty at very short notice and are systematically exploited overseas as modern slaves in partnership with governments, international organizations, and private entities that sign “confidential” (secret) agreements with Cuba’s Ministry of Health or specialized State agencies, such as Comercializadora de Servicios or Antex (the later only in Angola). Cuba typically receives payment from host governments entering into bilateral agreements with entities of the Cuban State; in certain cases international agencies or third countries pay the bill. Cuba retains between 97% to 80% of the wages paid per worker.

Aside from the labor exploitation, workers are subject to many other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatments, such as long enforced family separation and the prohibition from entering Cuba for at least eight years and confiscating wages held in savings if “deserting” a mission.²²

As of September 2021, Cuba had 327 state enterprises exporting services;²³ details are lacking, given the usual lack of transparency from Cuban entities, but the so-called “medical internationalism” reportedly generates from 55-75% of the revenues. In May 2023, Cuba was reporting around 22,000 medical workers serving in around 58 to 59 countries from over 605,698 workers who had served until that date across five continents.²⁴

¹⁸ The Trafficking in Persons Protocol is a supplement to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/protocol-prevent-suppress-and-punish-trafficking-persons>

¹⁹ Maria C. Werlau, “Cuba-Venezuela’s Health Diplomacy: The Politics of Humanitarianism,” Cuba in Transition: Volume 20, Nov. 2010.

²⁰ Maria C. Werlau, “Cuba’s Cash-for-Doctors Program,” *The Wall Street Journal*, Aug. 16, 2010.

²¹ Maria C. Werlau, Testimony to the U.S. Congress, Washington, D.C., Mar. 22, 2016. U.S. House of Representatives’ Hearing of the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations Committee on Foreign Affairs, “Get it right this time: a victims-centered trafficking in persons report.”

²² An undetermined number, allegedly up to 20%, of the Cuban doctors reportedly decided to remain in Brazil when Cuba removed the entire mission in November 2018. (For more information on Cuba’s temporary workers’ program, see <https://nosomosdesertores.com> and “Fact Sheet: Cuba’s export workers,” op. cit.)

²³ “MINCEX: Cuba tiene muchas potencialidades para incrementar exportaciones,” *Cuba Debate*, Oct. 12, 2021.

²⁴ Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, X, May 23, 2023, <https://x.com/DiazCanelB/status/1660991669112537090>; “Cuba denuncia que EE. UU. lanza convocatoria con fondos millonarios para fomentar campaña contra colaboración médica, Granma, Jul. 22, 2023; Cuba denuncia que EE. UU. lanza convocatoria con fondos millonarios para fomentar campaña contra colaboración médica, Granma, Jul. 22, 2023 <https://www.granma.cu/cuba/2023-07-22/cuba-denuncia-que-ee-uu-lanza-convocatoria-con-fondos->

Cuba also uses these “brigades” to advance its geostrategic, political, and economic goals, deriving capital that translates into myriad benefits: strengthened ties with host nations, international support including votes in international organizations, opportunities to spy and recruit agents for Cuba’s intelligence services, assistance, loans, investments, access to needed imports and markets for Cuba’s exports. The workers sent overseas in any capacity may be officials of Cuban intelligence or recruited clandestine agents; when not, they must still do the bidding of Cuban intelligence (serving as informants and/or agents of influence, etc.) or face reprisals.

These labor arrangements date back to the early 1960s, when Cuba started to export workers to allies. Over time, the scheme in the medical and educational fields attained the acquiescence, support, and even the participation of many democratic governments and international agencies such as the *World Health Organization* and the *Pan American Health Organization*. A huge number of Cuban collaborators sent to Chavez in Venezuela starting in 2003 and, by 2005, export services net of tourism had become Cuba’s primary source of revenues. In 2018-2022 Cuba reported \$31 billion in revenues from “health and social service” exports and medical export services generated \$4.9 billion in 2022.²⁵ These revenues are not used to help the people of Cuba. According to Cuba’s Office of National Statistics, in 2018 to 2022 just .6% to 2% of the reported export services were invested in social services including health.

Cuba: Health service exports & Investments in social services incl. health

US\$ millions

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Exports of health and social services	\$6,398.5	\$5,382.2	\$3,997.9	\$4,349.9	\$4,882.2
Investment in social services incl. health	\$51.5	\$27.7	\$40.4	\$557.4	\$789.3
% of invest. in social services incl. health	1%	0.60%	1%	2%	2%

Source: *Statistical Yearbooks, Cuba's National Office of Statistics and Information.*

The Cuban regime and its international networks --agents of influence, allies, and friends--diligently glorify the practice²⁶ as “solidarity” and “humanitarianism,” promoting its global expansion through intense diplomatic, intelligence, and propaganda efforts.

III. Many other egregious violations

The totalitarian Cuban regime has brought upon millions of Cuba exile, family separation, forced expatriation, indoctrination, untold miseries, and despair, denied their right to a standard of living adequate for health and well-being, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services (Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights). Enforced socialist central planning

millonarios-para-fomentar-campana-contra-colaboracion-medica (Actual numbers are impossible to verify and are reported inconsistently by Cuban officials and official agencies.)

²⁵ Anuario Estadístico de Cuba, Oficina Nacional de Estadísticas, www.one.cu.

²⁶ See one well-funded US-based effort at <http://medicc.org/ns/> and one of several books with this approach: John M. Kirk & H. Michael Erisman, *Cuban medical internationalism: origins, evolution, and goals* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2009).

for the masses (always with exclusive privileges for the ruling elite) quickly destroyed a thriving economy and middle class and turning Cuba into a parasitic state that today receives aid from even tiny St. Vincent and the Grenadines. As of October 2024, Cuba held at least 1,117 political prisoners in terrible conditions including at work camps subjected to forced labor. Over 550 are still incarcerated for their involvement in the July 11, 2021 mass peaceful protests all over Cuba.²⁷

Since 1986 Cuba's external debt is in moratorium and it has defaulted time and again on restructuring agreements despite massive debt forgiveness. Today, the country is a land of widespread misery and despair, with a wrecked infrastructure, continually declining agricultural and industrial production, with a huge deficit in housing as buildings and houses crumbling to the ground on top of its inhabitants. Migration crisis, fertility crisis, sanitary crisis, demographic crisis, a terrifying number of suicides... It presents a desolate panorama whose only foreseeable future is continuing decline.

The rulers, now open capitalists of an enclave and apartheid system loosen and reimpose restrictions so-called economic "reforms" at will, as there are no judicial guarantees for the entrepreneurs or investors, national or foreign. In fact, many citizens of Canada, Britain, Spain, Chile, and other countries have been imprisoned for years under fabricated charges without due process of law.

Meanwhile, Cuba has consistently acted against the United States and regional and global security.²⁸ It has apparently allowed or participated in attacking US and Canadian diplomats with sonic devices. It has undermined and subverted democracies and directly intervening in Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Bolivia to impose its authoritarian model. The Cuban regime is like a cancer that has spread its insidious ways, with a revolutionary plan for regional expansion today called "the Bolivarian Alliance." It has solidified political, military and strategic alliances with Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, Belarus, Vietnam, and the likes, to challenge and defeat the United States. It continues supporting and harboring terrorists and criminals from the U.S., Spain, Colombia, and many other countries. It has participated in drug trafficking and many other illegal international activities.

As the citizens, forced into poverty, lack even basic food, medicines, and essential services, the regime devotes massive resources to build hotels,²⁹ for internal repression, and to fund a huge diplomatic-intelligence-propaganda apparatus for international influence. No other country of similar economic standing or size comes close to this investment, in fact, very few larger and much richer do.

Cuba's huge network of around 126 embassies, 20 consulates, and 20 representations, includes a mission to the UN New York of 45 diplomats, entirely disproportionate to its economy and size. Most, if not all, the embassies have embedded intelligence centers dedicated to recruiting agents and managing a gigantic global army of spies, collaborators, and propagandists: journalists, government officials, artists, scientists, academics, etc. to advance Cuba's goals. The Directorate of Intelligence's

²⁷ "The Cuban regime keeps more than 550 demonstrators from July 11th imprisoned," CiberCuba, Nov. 28, 2024.

²⁸ The author has written and presented extensively on this issue. Here publications on this topic include Maria C. Werlau, *Cuba's intervention in Venezuela: a strategic occupation with global implications*, Free Society Project, 2019.

²⁹ 12.6 - Volumen de inversiones por clase de actividad económica, Oficina Nacional de Estadísticas, República de Cuba.

prime objective is to advance Cuba's interests by countering the U.S. Cuba is estimated to have at least 5,000 intelligence relations in the U.S.³⁰ and over 1,600 in Latin America and the Caribbean.³¹

Fidel Castro considered propaganda “the main food of the revolution”³² and, from the beginning of the revolutionary regime, prioritized building a synchronized propaganda apparatus under the ideological department of the Cuban Communist Party. Prensa Latina, one of two news agencies, has a staff of around 500 and 1,000 freelancers in 400 offices internationally, and operates in six languages in multiple print, television, radio, and digital sites.³³ Cuba also funds a vast and unique international solidarity network it has built over decades that, according to its reports, has 1,649 friendship associations in 150 countries, 73 alumni associations in 62 countries, and relationships with 60 peace organizations in 57 countries. In 2023, it created 109 “Parliamentary Friendship Groups” to influence foreign policy within parliaments worldwide: 34 in Europe, 21 in the Americas/Caribbean, 28 in Africa & Middle East, and 26 in Asia.³⁴

It is no surprise, then, that Cuba's Communist dictatorship enjoys impunity and even worldwide support despite its egregious human rights violations and threats to global peace and security. With its parasitic socialist economy in perennial crisis, it receives extensive unconditional aid from governments and international organizations.

U.S. policy recommendations: a path forward

The Cuban regime expends massive global efforts to blame the U.S. embargo for everything that goes wrong in Cuba; some just argue that because “economic sanctions on Cuba have not worked,” they should be eliminated. Since 1992, Cuba has presented an annual resolution to the UN General Assembly on the “necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.” It's a cheap shot against the U.S. that receives overwhelming global support, and is inconsequential to everyone but the forgotten people of Cuba. But this and other such pronouncements are totally silent on what the international community is willing to do regarding its “responsibility to protect” the oppressed people of Cuba. The U.S. remains the only country willing to pressure for change in Cuba with something more than empty words. In fact, even empty words are lacking. I cannot recall any General Assembly resolutions on any of the egregious human rights violation or international interventions by the Cuban regime.

Since 2005, the UN enshrined its responsibility to protect “should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities manifestly fail to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity.” The intervention may be by peaceful means such as

³⁰ “Estimated Number of Cuba's Intelligence Relationships Dedicated to Working Against the United States,” Cuba Archive, Dec. 2021, <https://cubaarchive.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Intelligence-relations-in-US-12.2021-update.pdf>

³¹ “Relaciones de Inteligencia de Cuba en Latinoamerica y el Caribe,” Cuba Archive, Dec. 2021, <https://cubaarchive.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Relaciones-de-Inteligencia-Latinoam..pdf>

³² “Un grave alerta de Guaicaipuro Lameda,” Las Armas de Coronel, Mar. 11, 2016 <https://lasarmasdecoronel.blogspot.com/2016/03/un-grave-alerta-de-guaicaipuro-lameda.html>

³³ Maria Werlau, *Cuba's intervention in Venezuela*, op. cit.

³⁴ Nuria Barbosa León, “Cuba, un faro de solidaridad,” *Granma*, Dec. 27, 2022, <https://www.granma.cu/mundo/2022-12-27/cuba-un-faro-de-solidaridad-27-12-2022-19-12-34>

diplomacy, mediation, or sanctions and, as a last resort, through collective action through the UN Security Council, including the use of force under Chapter VII of the UN Charter.³⁵

Actually, the Cuban regime is rewarded by the vast majority of the international community for its misdeeds. On November 15th, 2023, Cuba was [elected](#) to the Executive Board of UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) for 2023-2027.³⁶ On October 10th, 2023, 76% of the General Assembly's possible votes (146 of 192), to sit at the [Human Rights Council](#) for a second 3-year term, responsible for "the promotion and protection of all human rights around the globe." In 2022, Cuba was elected to three subsidiary bodies of the UN Economic and Social Council, in 2021 to the International Labor Organization's Governing Body (2021-2024), and in 2020 to the Executive Boards of the Pan-American Health Organization (2020-2023), UN Children's Fund, UNICEF (2020-2022), and World Food Program (2020-2022).

Many have called --and some continue to call-- for engagement and appeasement of Cuba's rulers. But if anything has not worked it is that. An ever revolving door of presidents, former presidents, kings and kings to be, parliamentarians, ministers, business leaders, scientists, and heads of international organizations from all over the world have paid court to the criminal Cuban dictatorship with official visits, "dialogue," unilateral concessions, massive debt forgiveness, continuing financial and material aid, free transfer of scientific and technical support, red carpet treatment of its leaders at major capitals, and even awards and nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize. Yet, since the official dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991, which led to Cuba's opening to foreign investment and a tourist industry focused on capitalist visitors, at least 401 have been killed extrajudicially,³⁷ thousands imprisoned, and millions pushed into exile.

What would likely work is if existing US laws are fully enforced that call for isolation and pressure on the Cuban regime to stop oppressing its people and threatening our national security. Many U.S. laws have been eroded by executive mandate or ignored. First, it is the right thing to do, second, it is the usual second line of defense short of an armed intervention, and third, it could be the final blow to an evil regime that has enslaved its people and is a threat to our country, the region, and the world. Indeed, multilateral sanctions would be best, and this great democracy should push to elicit them, but the fact is that the U.S. alone can greatly impact Cuba's primary sources of revenues.

The list of current legislation in place includes the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act (also known as "Helms Burton law"), the Trafficking in Persons Victims Act (TVPA), and additional measures under the State Sponsor of Terrorism designation and the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act.

³⁵ About the responsibility to protect, Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, United Nations, <https://www.un.org/en/genocide-prevention/responsibility-protect/about>; Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 16 September 2005, 60/1, 2005 World Summit Outcome, United Nations, https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RE_S_60_1.pdf

³⁶ "Díaz-Canel hails Cuba's election to UNESCO Executive Board," Cubanew/CAN, Nov. 16, 2023 <http://www.cubanews.acn.cu/cuba/22967-diaz-canel-hails-cuba-s-election-to-unesco-executive-board>

³⁷ Cuba Archive Database, op. cit.