

South Africa and Cuba during Nelson Mandela's government

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Abstract

The present work constitutes a brief historical review of the Southfrican reality and the Cuban medical collaboration during Nelson Mandela government. It seeks as objective to analyze the influence of Mandela's government politicians in the transformation of the society with the Cuban medical collaboration. When the African National Congress through Mandela it assumes the presidency of the country, finds a society with big social and economic contrasts standing out that the quantity of doctors for inhabitants didn't solve the black population's real necessities. The government's political will to improve the existence material conditions of their people and it was materialized in many of the measures taken during the years in that it exercised his government. Established diplomatic relationships and agreements were signed for the Cuban medical collaboration in that country. The existed an integration of the collaborators with the workers of health centers. That's why we conclude that the Cuban experience in Southáfrica have positive results mainly in the native population.

Key Words: South Africa, Nelson Mandela, African National Congress, Cuban medical collaboration

Introduction

The Republic of Sudáfrica with a surface of 1.219.080 km² extends in the south end of the African continent. The country limits with Namibia to the Northwest; to the north with Botswana and to the east with Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Suazilandia. The country is surrounded by the oceans Atlantic and Indian.

It has a population of approximately 52 981 991 inhabitants. Most is composed for black of African origin in 79,6%, xhosa, Zulu, and other 8 groups. The percentage however is the lowest in the sub-Saharan África. The multirracismo and the existent multiculturalidad have been worth him the name of the country of the rainbow.

Among the most important cities they appear Pretoria (their capital), City of the End, Johannesburg, Durban, Port Elisabeth and Pietermaritzburg.

The main religion is the Christianity. But they are also practiced African traditional cults, the islam, the Mormonism, and the Hinduism, a Jewish community also subsists (2% of the targets)

Sudáfrica recognizes eleven languages like official languages, although both main they are of European origin: English used as communication vehicle between all the sudafricanos and the derived afrikáans of the neerlandés.

This country is one of the members founders of the African Union, and he/she has the biggest economy in the continent among all the members. He/she is also member founder of the United Nations. It is a Republic with government's democratic system, which is committed to achieve the equality among men, women and people of all races. The Constitution is the supreme law of the country, applicable to all the organs of the State in government's levels. A separation exists among the executive power, legislative and judicial that maintains balance of power among them.

The economy of Sudáfrica is the most potent and important in the African continent, since it almost monopolizes 25% of the whole continent GDP, and it plays an important part in the development of the region. It is considered as an economy of stocking-high rent by the World Bank. The economy sudafricana

has a great volume of national capital - public and private - in narrow relationship with the big world economies. In spite of this, the unemployment is extremely high and Sudáfrica is inside the ten countries with more social inequality, unemployed is around the population's room

After the Second World War, in 1948, the National Party arrived to the power a system segregationist and racist that it began the apartheid, word that means in Afrikáans pleading "separation". You creó a vast juridical and social system to separate to the white and black races, with advantage for the first one, to which was granted privileges.

With the step of the years, the apartheid caused I reject, I reject and indignation in the whole world. Numerous countries broke up diplomatic and commercial relationships with Sudáfrica, generating the government's sudafricano growing isolation. Inside Sudáfrica, the movements anti-apartheid, especially the African National Congress or CNA, they began resistance campaigns, strikes, marches, protests and sabotages that were repressed with hardness by the government's forces.

In 1989 a blow took place inside the National Party. In him, the President Pieter Botha was displaced by Frederick Of Klerk, and this began the dismantlement of the apartheid. The proscription that weighed on the African National Congress and other political organizations of left, rose and it was liberated Nelson Mandela after 27 years of prison. The legislation of the Apartheid was gradually retired. In a referendum of 1993, the targets accepted to grant the right to the vote to most quarter note, and the following year, in 1994, they were carried out the first democratic elections of the country. Nelson Mandela was elect president for absolute majority in representation of the CNA, party that has stayed from then on in the power. The international isolation that weighed on the country arrived to its end.

Mandela became a symbol of the fight against the apartheid and a legendary figure that it represented the lack of all the black inhabitants' of Sudáfrica freedom. Their intelligent politics allowed to maintain the peace inside the country and this allowed that Sudáfrica came out in search of other horizons in its period of command (1994-1999).

In that context Cuban doctors they developed an arduous work in remote mountains breaking the strong campaign that was organized in the racist press by doctors private sudafricanos against them and they guaranteed during that period such a sensitive aspect the health of a town.

All that exposed previously constituted a motivation for the realization of the present revision work that seeks as objective to analyze the influence of the politicians of Nelson Mandela government in the transformations of the society sudafricana with the competition of the prescribe-Cuban collaboration in that country.

Discussion and Result

In February of 1990 Nelson Mandela is liberated. The old régime sudafricano in May of that same year takes a series of such complementary measures as: legalization of the political parties, rising of the emergency state, political prisoners' liberation, signs of a national agreement of peace between the government and twenty-five organizations and political parties, among others. But a series of problems that you/they maintained in state of tension the internal situation of the country prevailed: the constitution that the politics of the apartheid, the political violence, sustained problems interétnicos and in spite of having been approved that the medical services began to be offered in the whole country without distinction of races, this was not more than a measure demagogue to counteract the great existent uneasiness among the native population and to try to calm the strong international campaign against the practices of the apartheid. However he/she stood out the force and political authority of the African National Congress.

After the electoral victory of the African National Congress in April of 1994, the enormous existent disparities subsisted among the millionaire medical services that were offered to the targets and those that received the rest of the citizens, the quantity of doctors for inhabitants didn't solve the black population's necessities. The system of health was based on the hospital attention, with a purely healing approach because almost all the physicians lent their services in hospitals and clinical peculiar of the big cities. The medical care to the native population was nonexistent, the same as the medical personnel of primary attention in places of high populational concentration, where high insalubridad levels existed. For alone to mention some indicators, the mortality in smaller than 1 year it was of 52 for 1 000 born alive and in smaller than 5 years, of 62 for 1 000 born alive.

Officially Nelson Mandela is sworn in as new president of Sudáfrica May 10 1994 in Pretoria.

Mandela's government inherited a country with economic inequality and a public service that it worked very different in communities where it depended if the

population era of white majority or quarter note. With a population of 40 million inhabitants, around 23 millions they lacked electricity or services of public health; 12 millions didn't have drinkable water; and two million children didn't attend the school in a society where the population's third was illiterate. There was 33 unemployment%, and little less than the half he/she lived under the line of poverty. The state funds were on the edge of the bankruptcy, with 5% of the budget spent in the refund of the debt, what caused that the promises of the Program of Reconstruction and Development were delayed, for what there was not the perspective of making reality the nationalization politicians or of employment creation. However, the government adopted political economic liberal to promote the foreign investment, in function of the Consent of Washington recommended by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

During Mandela's presidency the politics of social protection was increased to 13% in the period 1996/97 and he/she stayed in 1997/98, although he/she was lowered to 7% in 1998/99. The government implanted equitable benefits for the communities, what included people with discapacidades, the maintenance of infants and the pensions for bigger adults, which had been granted in function of the racial groups before his administration.

The politics of respect to all the citizens, with independence of their sex, age, color of the skin, religious beliefs, instruction level and economic and social status were the center of their actions from beginnings of their command like President.

Mandela's special human sensibility is one of the facets of its personal characteristic and he/she put on especially in evidence in its performance from the summit of the power, in its fight against the extreme poverty and the hunger; but also when not abusing of that power, not even to charge him to who had made him suffer during years in prison.

The political will to improve the material conditions of existence of their town (housings, work, wage, feeding, education, health) it was materialized in many of the measures taken during the years in that the government exercised in Sudáfrica.

For Mandela the national reconciliation was its main objective in its presidency, as the main character that was of the transition of a country governed by a minority under the politicians of the apartheid, to a democratic and multicultural nation. Although it was surrounded of comforts, Mandela's routine life was simple, and it donated its annual incomes of 552 000 rands to the Fund for Nelson Mandela Childhood that had been founded in 1995.

During the new multiracial parliament's first session at the end of 1994, the president's May Mandela called to work to build a society centered in the man that guaranteed the individual's freedom and it restored the dignity of each sudafricano affirming that such an objective could be reached through the application of the Program of Reconstruction and Development elaborated by its government that previ6 to implement in 100 days projects that you/they responded to the most shouting necessities and that they should be low the direct supervision of the State.

Immense efforts had to carry out Mandela's government to transform the society and to make it fairer for most of the population. Although it faced difficulties due to the fiscal requirements the program that was financed by means of the cuttings in the government's expenses, it reached achievements.

By means of this program measures of social benefit were adopted particularly in the field of the Public Health, foreseeing the gratuitous medical care to pregnant and children smaller than six years, the supply of food for the scholars of poor communities and the establishment of additional community centers of health. They were built clinical new, taking the medical care to 5000 000 people, 1,5 million housings were electrified, creating employment opportunities stops more than 4 000 000 of people, they started more than 900 projects of public works, etc.

With the back of the Law of Restitution of Lands of 1994, he/she was allowed to people that had lost their property - as a result of the Law of Native Lands of 1913 - to make their respective birdcall, what took to the admission of about 10 thousand petitions. Also, the Law nr. 3 of Reformation of the Property of 1996 the rights of the forks of lands that lived, assured they cultivated or they raised livestock in the farms. With this legislation, this forks were protected so that they

were not expelled without a judicial order, and to those that were bigger than 65 years. Other legal tools were the Law of Development of Aptitudes of the Workers of 1998 that established mechanisms to finance the abilities and dexterities in any work place. The Law of Labor Relationships of 1995 promoted the democracy in the work place, the collective contracto and the resolution of labor conflicts. The Law of Minimum Conditions of Employment of 1997, improved the protection of the basic rights of the workers; and the Law of Equality of Employment of 1998 was approved to avoid the discrimination and to assure its application in the work place.

In contrast with this a group of approximately 2000 doctors emigrated to work to the foreigner and other many, educated during the apartheid, they refused to work in rural areas.

Experts of the beautiful history of collaboration of the Cubans with needier nations, the authorities sudafricanas traveled to Cuba in search of the indispensable help. Sudáfrica and Cuba established diplomatic relationships May 11 1994. Nuestro Major in Boss Fidel Castro Ruz visited that country in two occasions during Mandela's government, in 1994 and in 1998.

Cuba and Sudáfrica subscribed November 20 1995 an agreement so that Cuban doctors covered those squares in hospitals and clinical that assisted the native population. The Congress of Unions of Sudáfrica (COSATU) and the population, they gave a hot welcome in March del 1996, in Johannesburg, to the first 200 Cuban doctors. Like part of this program of collaboration, specialists in Gynecology, Pediatrics, Anesthesiology, Surgery, Integral General Medicine worked in several counties sudafricanas, besides the Cuban doctors that offered advice in the Ministry of Health of Sudáfrica from December of 1995.

The pressures that the Cubans faced from their arrival began then. The press means dominated by bound individuals to the North American politics began campaigns against Cuba and pressures were made so that the Cubans don't enter in the hospitals neither they executed operations. To the professional zeal he/she also united the hate of the racists for the defeats that caused them the troops Cuban internationalists next to the FAPLA of Angola.

However the profesionalidad, the delivery, the immense capacity of the Cuban doctors' work changed that reality. The collaborators' integration existed with the workers of the centers of health, you offered the necessary help but in turn it was good for the feedback for its access to advanced technology and up-to-date literature that are of difficult access in Cuba due to the imperialistic blockade.

Professors of the Island once approved by the Council Medical sudafricano they exercised in that stage like professors in the university UNITRA, black institution of higher education located in an underdeveloped rural area, and it was the arrival of those Cuban doctors the one that impeded that he/she closed their doors the Ability of Medicine and Sciences of the Health, inaugurated in 1985. Se the affection of students and employees of this high center of studies they won, medical youths that gave fruits to the health of that country in few years formed.

The Cuban physicians carried out an encomiable work, and conquering the barriers of the language carried out complex surgical interventions, they entered in contact with unknown illnesses in our country (malnutrition like the Kwashiorkor, the poisoning for grasses, bites of snakes, others eliminated in Cuba and other endemic of the African continent. Likewise they have made in front of the AIDS, one of the main sanitary problems in Sudáfrica, is the country of the world with more number of having infected by this illness.

In 1999 Mandela he/she believes the Foundation Nelson Mandela for the development of the rural area, the construction of schools and the combat to the AIDS. Lapsed five years of command the president, requested the liberation to give him I pass to the new generations.

For the elections of 1999, around 3 million people had been able to obtain phone lines; 1,5 million children had enrolled in the educational system; 500 clinics had been reconstructed; 2 million people had benefitted with the electric power service; that the access to the service of water had extended to 3 million people; and 75 0000 marry they had built to harbor to 3 million inhabitants.

Nelson Mandela was considered the "father of the nation sudafricana ", as well as the "father founder of the democracy", and the "emancipador of the nation, his savior. Their presidency lapsed more than one decade, it has been considered as "the golden years of the hope and the social harmony". outside of the opposite sudafricanas the world respect was won by its activism against the apartheid, and to foment the reconciliation among the different races, for what has been valued as a "moral authority" that had a lot "desire for the truth."

Mandela was, without place to doubts, truly humanist man's example. Among the this sentences for him that can serve as evidence of his characteristic; but that he/she also speaks of the great political content with a strong load ethics he/she is the following one:

"The death is something unavoidable. When a man has made what he considers as his duty towards his town and his country, he can rest in peace. I believe that I have made that effort and that, therefore, I will sleep for all the eternity."

In spite of the end of the apartheid, millions of black sudafricanos continue living in the poverty at the moment, partly because of the inherited problems of the régime of the apartheid and also to that the governments post-apartheid have had the hands tied in the economic topics, which were negotiated almost exclusively by the salient government's members during the transition. This way the targets lose the political control but they make sure maintain their economic privileges. However, the housing politics carried out by the CNA has produced some improvement under the conditions of life in many regions, although the inequality among the different social classes is still very big, compared with the western standards.

The Cuban medical collaborators continue offering their experiences and knowledge in the nation sudafricana and according to their beneficiaries they have been of incalculable value for their towns. All that achieved is the result of a foreign policy of principles maintained consequently by Cuba in the solidarity internationalist.

Conclusions

Sudáfrica is a country full with contrasts that they left near 300 years of colonialism and racial segregation and in its territory the differences of the developed world are appreciated and of the underdeveloped one.

The president's government Nelson Mandela (1994-1999) who won the first non racial elections in the history of that country it developed the arduous and immense task of palliating the necessities of most native. The balance was unquestionably positive.

Collaborating of Cuba, island of the Caribbean lent valuable services in that African nation and they contributed to improve the indicators of health in that period; with delivery and profesionalidad they knocked down the campaign that in its against they lifted some press means and physicians sudafricanos.

Today they continue offering their experiences and knowledge being their work of incalculable value for those towns where they put the principles of the internationalism on high.

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