

CUBA BRIEFING SHEET

Racial Demographics:

- US State Department officially identifies Cuba as 62% black.
- Cuban scholars say up to 72% of population is non-white.

Conditions:

According to Cuban statistics released in The Challenges of the Racial Problems in Cuba (2008)¹, a 385-page study whose publication was authorized by Raul Castro's regime, described the plight of the Black population as a whole. Written by economist (Chief Investigator), Dr. Esteban Morales Dominguez, and based on 2005 data, it reveals that:

- Black population recorded growing impoverishments over the past 25 years;
- Cuba's total civil and public leadership is predominantly white (71%), despite a Black population of somewhere between 62-72%;
- 72.7% of scientists and technicians are white; 80% of the professors at the University of Havana are white, and that average is pretty much stable throughout the country;
- Privately owned land is 98% white; only 2% of the private sector in land is in the hands of Blacks;
- Blacks have only 5% interests in State cooperatives and with growing privatizing of land, they will be totally disenfranchised;
- In 2005, **65.8%** of able-bodied Black Cubans were **unemployed**, whereas employment of Whites exceeded 70%;
- In 2009, **70%** of Cuban Blacks were estimated to be unemployed;
- The skyrocketing unemployment of Blacks has led to increased "black market" and other criminal activities, resulting in a **prison**

¹ See: Dr Esteban Morales Domínguez, *Desafíos de la problemática racial en Cuba* (The Challenges of the Racial Problem in Cuba). La Habana: Fundación Fernando Ortiz, 2007.

population that is now estimated to be 85% Black, averaging in age between 18 – 28 years;

- 68% of white Cubans declared strong **opposition** to inter-racial marriage, and 58% said Blacks were “less intelligent than whites”, according to the 2005 survey.
- Blacks overwhelmingly (60.8%) blamed "racial discrimination" in hiring and promotion for these stark contrasts, while an overwhelming majority of Cubans of both races agreed that "racial prejudice continues to be current on the island" (75%).

Because less than 15% of Cuban-Americans are Black, and **85% are Caucasians**, increased Cuban-American remittances (now totaling more than \$1.5 Billion per year) only further enrich white **Cubans inside Cuba**, creating greater disparities. Current US foreign policy is thus contributing to the creation of **a new white elite in Cuba**.

Justice Activists and Prison System

- There are 25 Black civil rights movements in Cuba, focused on racial justice and which are largely marginalized by the media and prevented from enjoying legal status. There is a sharp distinction between human and civil rights groups in Cuba with the human rights group being fundamentally white. Over the past 15 years, the two major Black civil rights movements which have emerged are the “**Citizens Committee for Racial Integration**” (CIR) and the “**Progressive Circle Party**” (PARP). Dr. Darsi Ferrer belongs to both.
- There are some 200 political prisoners in Cuba and about 60 are reported to be black; however, specifically Black civil rights activists are not considered political prisoners (including Dr. Ferrer) but “common criminals” and treated as common prisoners in maximum security detention centers.

Prominent Civil Rights leaders

- **Manuel Cuesta Morúa**, chairperson of the “**Progressive Circle Party**” (PARP);
- **Leonardo Calvo Cárdenas**, deputy chairperson of the “**Progressive Circle Party**” (PARP);
- **Juán Madrazo Luna**, National Coordinator of the “**Citizens Committee for Racial Integration**” (CIR);
- **Dr Darsi Ferrer Ramirez**, director of the “**Juan Bruno Zayas Health and Human Rights Center**”, a civil rights organization that provides free medical attention for the country’s poor;
- **Lariza Diversent**, Esq., civil rights lawyer who specializes in defending “profiled” Black youth and pursuing lawsuits against the State in situations of proven racial discrimination, racial harassment, and racial abuses in general.

Designated US-based representatives of the two chief Cuban civil rights movements:

- **Prof. Enrique Patterson**, spokesperson for the “**Progressive Circle Party**” (PARP);
Tel: (305) 7762948
- **Ms Victoria Ruiz**, spokesperson for the “**Citizens Committee for Racial Integration**” (CIR);
Tel: (786) 3036067