

***For immediate release***

**28 civil society organizations release joint statement urging “much more” by Canada to prevent loss of life in Cuba, as the U.S. ramps up its blockade and threats of military intervention**

Today, dozens of unions, international cooperation, human rights, solidarity and faith-based organizations released a joint statement in the *Hill Times*, calling on Ottawa to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cuba, cornerstone rights of all states under international law. The organizations call on the Canadian government to publicly oppose and work to stop a U.S. military intervention in Cuba; speak out forcefully against unlawful U.S. coercive measures to withhold fuel and starve the Cuban people; work more determinedly with the United Nations and other countries to get fuel and other life-sustaining supplies to Cuba without delay.

"Cuban partners of The United Church of Canada firmly state that Cuba is already experiencing an economic war and that they are living a 'slow death'. Due to the U.S.-imposed fuel blockade and May 1 executive order, they describe exorbitant prices for fuel, lack of access to water, food, and health care—including dialysis, cancer treatment, and ultrasounds for pregnant women, and fear that damage caused by these measures will be irreversible and long-lasting." - **Wendy Gichuru, Executive Minister (Acting), Church in Mission, The United Church of Canada.**

This statement echoes the mounting calls from civil society organizations and individuals across the country for Canada to meaningfully respond to the dire, worsening humanitarian emergency in Cuba and the urgent need for our government to reject unlawful U.S. coercive measures.

"Workers across Canada stand in solidarity with the people of Cuba. Canada must do more to help address this humanitarian crisis and uphold the principles of sovereignty, non-intervention, and international law." - **Bea Bruske, President of the Canadian Labour Congress.**

Also today, Canada's parliamentary Subcommittee on International Human Rights (SDIR) is holding a [Briefing on Human Rights in the Caribbean Region](#). Like the February 26 Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development [hearing](#) before it, the witness list raises serious concerns about the balance and range of perspectives to be heard by the committee.

Last Friday, Quebec's foremost association of international development agencies (AQOCI) passed a unanimous resolution in solidarity with Cuba.

"In these times when the principles of international law are being undermined, it is essential to show solidarity in defending the right of countries like Cuba to exercise their self-determination, supported by their population, free from foreign intervention based on international power dynamics." - **Michèle Asselin, Director General (AQOCI).**

On June 8, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, [warned](#) that the expansion of U.S. sanctions against Cuba is causing widespread harm to the population and endangering lives, urging a halt to sanctions which violate international law. One month earlier, the UN Resident Coordinator in Cuba, Francisco Pichón [stated](#) that with the US blockade cutting off oil, the island's healthcare has been

wrecked, tens of thousands of surgeries postponed, access to clean water lost and babies put at risk. The UN expert concluded, “We need fuel now to save lives.”

Since U.S. President Trump's threats to 'take over' Cuba, dozens of civil society organizations, churches, union locals, labour councils, solidarity networks and thousands of individuals from across the country have been urging Ottawa to reject the U.S. blockade and threats of invasion that put lives, rights and the UN Charter at risk. The Canadian government must be bold and defend Cuban sovereignty, international law and the lives of Cubans.

**For more information or to arrange interviews:**

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