

## **Cuba Vive – End the blockade on health**

This union/branch/region/district/CLP/organisation notes that:

Cuba's commitment to health for all has helped the country achieve world-renowned health services for its people despite 62 years of an illegal US blockade.

Today, these achievements are under threat. A combination of the COVID-19 pandemic, global economic crisis, climate change, extra sanctions imposed by the Trump administration, and inclusion on the US's State Sponsors of Terrorism (SSOT) list have taken a terrible toll on the health service.

The country's dedicated health professionals struggle with limited resources to treat patients. From surgical supplies to spare parts, paracetamol to sutures: items that are in plentiful supply in the UK are increasingly hard to come by or cost up to three or four times more. Some health indicators have declined and there has been an increase in preventable deaths and suffering.

Today's shortages are unprecedented. After leading the region for many years, Cuba's impressive health indicators are suffering. Between 2019 and 2022 the infant mortality rate rose from 5 per thousand live births to 7.5.

Since US companies won't sell to them, Cuban doctors are forced to adapt larger catheters to use for infants with renal failure who need dialysis; many of the 450 Cuban children diagnosed with childhood cancer each year are forced to go without the appropriate drugs; and 20,000 Cuban families waiting for diagnoses of genetic diseases have not been able to receive adequate care because the technology needed to treat them contains over ten per cent US components and therefore can't be sold to Cuba.

In the midst of this, Cuba's commitment to internationalism continues to inspire. From sending doctors to help treat COVID patients in 45 countries during the pandemic, to training medical students from the global south, including 144 Palestinians students currently studying at Havana's Latin American Medical School.

Cuba's continued inclusion on the SSOT list threatens Cuba's ability to continue its international health programmes as well as provide health care for its own population.

We welcome the Cuba Vive medical appeal launched by the Cuba Solidarity Campaign and UNSION regions in January 2024 which aims to raise money to buy and send containers of life-saving medical aid to Cuba.

This union/branch/region/district/CLP agrees to support Cuba Vive by:

- Donating to the appeal
- Raising awareness and encourage support by publicising and distributing appeal materials to members
- Promoting the #OfftheList campaign to remove Cuba from the US State Sponsors of Terrorism list