



**Genocide Watch**  
Alliance Against Genocide

## Cuba Country Report 2022

The Spanish colonization of Cuba lasted for nearly 400 years. It subjected the Cuban population to [oppressive labor practices, land expropriation](#), and forced assimilation. Cubans fought three wars for independence between 1868 and 1898. The Spanish colonial government imposed a “Reconcentration Policy” that forced [one-third of the Cuban population into concentration camps. In these camps, famine and disease led to the deaths of over 250,000 Cubans](#). The Spanish-American War of 1898 freed Cuba from Spain but U.S. business took control.

After the 1959 Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro founded a one-party communist state. It has ruled with unchecked [repression](#) ever since. Army and police [target any public opposition](#) by human rights groups, unions, journalists, and non-governmental associations. From 2010 to 2012, [detentions of political opponents rose almost threefold](#).

Following the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, the United States placed an embargo on Cuba that is still in effect. The embargo places restrictions on trade and travel, severely impacting the Cuban population. Restrictions have harmed [UN development programs, agricultural assistance](#), and access to [medical technology and equipment](#). President Diaz-Canel has [claimed that the embargo is “genocidal.”](#)

In 2003 the Castro regime began a massive crackdown on dissent known as [the Black Spring](#). 75 journalists, activists, and other political dissidents were [arrested and sentenced to up to 28 years in Cuba's prisons](#). It was not until 2011 that [the last of them were released](#).

Upset with [living conditions](#) and restrictions on civil liberties, Cubans took to the streets in July of 2021— the nation’s largest anti-government demonstrations [since 1994](#). President Diaz-Canel ordered [security forces to violently attack protesters, many of whom were](#) arrested, subjecting over [5,000](#) peaceful demonstrators to [detention](#). Detainees were denied legal representation and access to medical care, and were subjected to [sleep deprivation, beatings, and torture](#).

Making up an [estimated 62%](#) of the country's population, Afro-Cubans are [disproportionately arrested by police](#). [Despite communist doctrines, they remain severely disadvantaged by economic inequality](#). Protests against [racism are outlawed, and civil rights activists are detained or forced into exile](#).

The Cuban government [controls most of the telecommunications infrastructure](#) including the internet and news, which allows it to [monitor and control access](#) to information. [During the July 2021 protests](#), the Cuban government [shut down the internet](#) to repress dissent. The government [passed additional censorship laws](#) such as Decree-Law 35 which bans the spread of what the government classifies as [“false news” or content that “incites mobilizations.”](#) Those caught violating the law are [labeled “cyberterrorists”](#) and are either arrested or suspended from accessing online services.

President [Biden has increased restrictions](#) in [response to Cuba's record of human rights violations](#) — [all denied by the Cuban government](#). On November 3rd, 2022, [185 member nations of the UN General Assembly again voted to condemn America's embargo](#) on Cuba.

Due to Cuba's continuing persecution of political dissidents and Cuban government denial: Genocide Watch considers Cuba to be at **Stage 3: Discrimination, Stage 8: Persecution, and Stage 10: Denial**.

### Genocide Watch recommends that:

- Psiphon Inc. and other companies dedicated to evading censorship should expand efforts to improve Cuban’s access to independent media and the free internet.
- The Biden Administration should resume the Obama administration's efforts to negotiate with Cuba for an end to political repression and release of all political prisoners in return for full relations with Cuba.
- The U.S. should immediately end travel restrictions and export and import restrictions on Cuba.
- The U.S. should end its isolation of Cuba and encourage US - Cuban business and civil society relations.