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WRITTEN BY FS-1 JESSICA LAYCOCK
AND FS-1 JORDAN ROBINSON

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Executive Summary:

The relationship between the United States and Cuba has been tumultuous over the course of the past 60 years as a result of political and economic standoffs. Politically, the failed attempt to overthrow the Castro regime at the Bay of Pigs led the United States down a path from which it could not return. Economically, the sanctions placed against Cuba from the United States further strengthened tensions. The two nations isolated themselves from one another, creating further dissonance until relations were finally restored in 1977.

Although relations softened during the late 70's, diplomatic relations were not officially restored between the two countries until 2015 under the Obama administration. During March of 2016, President Obama visited Cuba, marking the first time that a U.S. president had visited the nation since 1928. Although Obama was able to address the Cuban public directly and meet with several high profile Cubans, former leader Fidel Castro did not approve of the visit. In fact, he said, "We do not need the empire to give us anything," indicating that we will continue to face hurdles in dealing with the Castro leadership.

Although the Castro leadership does not approve of United States political intervention, they are not wholly opposed to opening economic trade with their neighbor to the north. This juxtaposition of wanting to enhance their economy without enhancing their people's social and political capabilities is an eventuality that the Cuban government must prepare to face. It is the opinion of the United States that the nation would be best served in providing its citizens with a healthy platform in which to engage in democratic discussion.

By taking active steps to change the relationship between Cuba and the United States, we must implement creative solutions that will help to further our interests of democracy promotion. This will be done through five main steps: open economic trade, enhance cultural and educational exchanges, target the Cuban-American diaspora and thought leaders, enhance democratic discourse and establish democratic institutions.

By opening economic trade, the Cuban population will be more exposed to cultural and educational exchanges as well. These exposures will lead to a level of awareness about the opportunities afforded to participants of the international community. Furthermore, these exchanges will result in the cross dialogue of scholars and influential thought leaders, which is intended to bring about democratic discourse and raise awareness of the ability that Cubans possess to affect change in their own nation. Through this democratic discourse, it is the hope of the United States that Cuba will take action and build democratic agencies and institutions.

In summary, this report outlines the rich history of the United States' interactions with Cuba, highlighting the public diplomacy efforts over the span of the last 60 years. In analyzing these interactions, we have made recommendations based upon our findings. These recommendations are to be used by the United States Ambassador to Cuba in moving forward with the foreign policy objective of establishing democratic institutions.

Cuba: A Brief Overview

The history between the United States and Cuba is unique in that they are geographical neighbors and once had relatively open relations. Before the end of World War II, Cuba was a popular vacation spot for many American travelers. However, in 1959, the Cuban Revolution won by Fidel Castro converted the country to communism and as a result, by 1961, the United States severed relations with the newly communist nation.¹ Problems began as hate propaganda directed towards the United States came from Fidel Castro's Cuba.¹ Then, the failed covert CIA attack on Cuba at the Bay of Pigs in 1961 led to the further tensions.

In 1977, President Carter alleviated restrictions by lifting the prohibition to travel to Cuba by U.S. residents which enabled cultural exchanges. This allowed Cubans and Cuban-Americans to interact with each other for the first time in almost 20 years. Then in 1980, a mass exodus of more than 120,000 Cuban asylum-seekers came to the United States in what is commonly referred to as the Mariel boatlift.¹ Unfortunately this period of calm was not sustained, as the subsequent Reagan administration embraced a stronger embargo and heightened travel restrictions in 1981, eventually resulting in a complete non-fraternization policy.

Even as the Cold War came to an end, tensions continued throughout the following two administrations: In 1992, the Clinton administration passed the Cuban Democracy Act, simultaneously increasing "people-to-people" international relations while continuing to maintain the trade embargo.¹ Then in 1999, Clinton allowed anyone from the U.S. to send remittances to Cuba. By the end of his term, around 175,000 Americans travelled to Cuba per year. Unfortunately, under President George W. Bush, these positive trends did not last, and the

¹ Wiseman, Geoffrey (2015). "Isolate or Engage: Adversarial States, US Foreign Policy, and Public Diplomacy." *Stanford University Press*.

United States once again added further stipulations to the embargo against Cuba and limited travel by citizens of both countries. All the while, the Bush administration simultaneously worked to force American liberty and democratic ideologies upon Cuba.

Finally, in July of 2015, President Obama announced the normalization of relations between the two nations.² Since then, Obama has continued working to ease travel restrictions to and from Cuba and is setting the stage to ensure that the United States will eventually lift the embargo, opening up the two nations to develop a full-fledged trading relationship. In doing so, socio-economic changes among the Cuban population will occur, which will in turn cause the political atmosphere in Cuba to change as well.

I. Demographics

A. Geographic Location

Located in the heart of the Caribbean, Cuba is approximately 800 miles long by 100 miles wide and accounts for a land mass of a little over 40,000 square miles.³ Cuba lies west of the North Atlantic Ocean, east of the Gulf of Mexico, northwest of the Windward Passage, northeast of the Yucatan Channel, and just 90 miles south of the Florida keys.³ There are 15 provinces and five geographic regions in Cuba. From countryside mountains to inland marshes, the diverse yet tropical climate of Cuba allows for a variety of flora and fauna.⁴ There are 35 mammal species and a large reptile population that can only be found in this part of the world.⁴

The terrain of the island is primarily flat, with jagged hills and mountains in the southeast. The lowest point is the Caribbean Sea at 0 m and the highest point is Pico Turquino at

² Scott, E. (2015). "Obama announces re-establishment of U.S.-Cuba diplomatic ties". *CNN*. Retrieved from <http://www.cnn.com/2015/07/01/politics/obama-note-to-castro-reestablish-ties/>

³ Stoner, Lynn K. "Geography of Cuba." *World Public Library*. World Heritage Encyclopedia, 6 Oct. 2006.

⁴ "Flora and Fauna." *Flora & Fauna in Cuba*. Cubanaturetravel.com, 23 Mar. 2002.

1,974 m (6,476 ft), part of the Sierra Maestra mountain range, located in the southeast of the island.^{3,4} Other significant mountain ranges are the Escambray Mountains in the center of the island, Sierra Cristal in the southeast, and Sierra del Rosario in the northwest.⁴ White sand beaches as well as mangroves and marshes can be found in the coastal area. The largest is the Zapata Swamp, with over 4,520 km² (1,750 sq mi).³ Cuba features 253 protected areas, 257 national monuments, 7 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, 7 Natural Biosphere Reserves and 13 Fauna Refuge among other non-tourist zones.³

Its strategic location between the South American continent and the United States tip of Florida made it perfectly suited for acting as a segway. It is home to the oldest overseas US Naval base, which was established in 1903.⁴⁵ After relations between the US and Cuba dissolved, its close proximity was utilized by the Soviet Union as the staging ground for the Cuban Missile Crisis.²⁷ Then, in the late 1970s and early 80s, Cuba served as a focal point for running illegal cocaine distribution from Colombia to the United States. Currently, its proximity continues to play a role in how both nations engage with one another.

As an important American military operational hub, the Guantánamo Bay Naval Base resides at the far southeast of the island. The United States assumed territorial control over the southern portion of Guantánamo Bay under the 1903 Cuban–American Treaty of Relations.⁵ Through this treaty, Cuba has granted the U.S. access to the land for the purpose of coaling and naval stations - for an indefinite period. The lease stipulates that the United States “shall

⁵Sklar, Barry, and Virginia H. Hagen. "Agreement Between the United States and Cuba for the Lease of Lands for Coaling and Naval Stations; February 23, 1903." The Avalon Project, 18 Jan. 2008.

⁶Espino, Maria Dolores. "International Tourism In Cuba: An Update." *Cuba in Transition* (2008): 130-37. Web.

²⁷ 1962: World relief as Cuban missile crisis ends. BBC News.

⁴⁵CNIC Naval Station Guantanamo Bay History". United States Navy.

exercise complete jurisdiction and control”, while recognizing “the continuance of the ultimate sovereignty of the Republic of Cuba.”⁵ While currently a sensitive subject, the United States and Cuba may be able to work together in the future once political changes have been implemented. Suggestions such as joint training operations and exercises between the U.S. and Cuban militaries may help to strengthen the divide between the two nations. Additionally, opening the land up to Cuban penetration may allow for greater connections to be made between the two cultures.

B. Culture and Society

Cuba has approximately 11.2 million citizens, with the largest amount of people living in the province of Havana. As an ethnically diverse nation, Cuba draws influences from European, African and indigenous American cultures.⁷ A former colony of Spain, the national language of Cuba is Spanish, and approximately one quarter of Cubans are Catholic. Another important religion in the region is Santeria, an Afro-Caribbean religion based on Yoruba beliefs and traditions, which is practiced in many households as well.⁷ Due to the heavy slave trade that arose in Cuba during the 16th century, more than a million African slaves were brought to Cuba as part of the Atlantic slave trade. However, Cuba did not end its participation in the slave trade until 1867.⁶ As the slaves outnumbered the European Cubans, a large proportion of Cubans are descended from these African slaves, accounting for as much as 60% of the population.³

⁶ Childs, Matt D. "The 1812 Aponte Rebellion in Cuba and the Struggle against Atlantic Slavery." *The American Historical Review* 113.3 (2008): 873-74. Web.

⁷ Mason, Michael Atwood. *Living santeria: Rituals and experiences in an Afro-Cuban religion*. Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002.

⁴⁸ "Censos en Cuba" [Census in Cuba]. National Office of Statistics of Cuba. Retrieved 24 February 2014.

In the span of one year, Cuba hosts roughly 3 million tourists from over 50 countries, with tourism accounting for the one of the largest contributors to the economic success of the country.⁸ Approximately one third of visitors to Cuba each year are Canadians, whose normalized relations with the island began in the early 1970s.⁸ The United States, on the other hand, has only just recently reestablished diplomatic relations in 2015, although tourism is anticipated to rapidly accelerate in the span of the next 10 years. Once known as a lively spot for Americans to escape to during the prohibition of alcohol, the Cuban government has since tightened control over alcohol consumption and sales, as well as prostitution and gambling.

Cuba has its own unique music, dancing, food and artwork.⁷ Dances such as the Rhumba and Salsa account for much of the Cuban nightlife, while Afro-Cuban jazz and ballet are considered the cultural highlights of the island. The streets of Cuba are lined with classic 1950s American cars that have been rebuilt to work to this day.⁸ This is because the sanctions placed on the nation make it too difficult to import or produce new cars. Furthermore, the cities of Cuba lie in various states of decay, as the government has failed to maintain or restore world heritage sites such as Old Havana.

C. Political Structure

Cuba's current political system has been in place since the 1959 Cuban Revolution and it is a Democratic Centralist Socialist Republic system. This means that the political structure of the state is constitutionally dedicated to the ideal of socialism with a decision-making practice that is democratically discussed, but with policy that is decided centrally and all members are

⁷ Mason, Michael Atwood. *Living santeria: Rituals and experiences in an Afro-Cuban religion*. Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002.

⁸ Espino, Maria Dolores. "International Tourism In Cuba: An Update." *Cuba in Transition* (2008): 130-37. Web. 4 Apr. 2016.8: Inside Cuba. (2010). BBC News Services.

bound to the decisions made.⁹ Cuba has three branches of government, the executive, legislative and judicial branch. However, unlike the United States these branches are not all democratically elected by the people and the system of checks and balances are not as strong.

The executive branch is the President of Cuba, now Raúl Castro. The president is elected by the the legislature, not the people, and serves for five year terms of which there is no limit.¹⁰ From the time of the Cuban Revolution until 2008 there has only been one president, Fidel Castro, the guerrilla revolutionary who took over the government in 1959. It was not until his poor health forced him to step down, that he was finally succeeded by his younger brother Raúl Castro. In 2013, in an effort to further the progressive government measures being made, Raúl Castro announced that he would step down after the end of his term, in 2018, to allow for a new candidate.¹¹

Cuba's national legislature, the National Assembly of People's Power, has 609 members that also serve five-year terms.¹¹ Cuba did not allow their citizens to vote for the legislators until 1992, that was a right afforded to the executive branch exclusively. Though Cubans can now choose their representatives, Cuba is a one-party system, the Communist Party, and political dissent is strictly forbidden.¹²

The judiciary branch of government is led by the People's Supreme Court, Cuba's highest court. It is also the court of last resort for all appeals against the decisions of provincial courts. However, the Constitution states that all legally recognized civil liberties can be denied to anyone who opposes the decision of the Cuban people to build socialism.¹¹ Therefore if you are a

⁹ Proyect, L. "Democracy in Cuba". Retrieved from http://www.columbia.edu/~lnp3/mydocs/state_and_revolution/democracy_in_cuba.htm

¹⁰ "The Constitution of the Republic of Cuba, 1976 (as Amended to 2002)". National Assembly of People's Power.

¹¹ "Cuba's Raúl Castro announces retirement in 5 years". Usatoday.com

¹² "Cuba". Human Rights Watch. 2006.

political dissenter, you do not get the rights to a fair a free trial. Because the justices are beholden to uphold the constitutional precepts of socialism, all the decision made by the court work towards that overarching goal, and the individual rights of many people are suppressed.

Voting is granted to all Cuban citizens over the age of 16 who have lived in Cuba for over two years and not been convicted of a crime.¹³ Because political dissent is not tolerated and there are many restrictions on emigration from the country, Cubans are left with little choice.¹³ Voting in municipalities has the greatest impact of democracy in Cuba because communities directly vote for candidates, but there is no campaigning allowed in Cuba; the candidates merely submit a resume.¹³ Cuba has been cited for many human rights violations which the government is either executing or doing nothing about, and the people do not have the democratic power to change their government's political structure or system to protect their own interests and safety.

D. Economic Overview

Cuba's economic system is a centralized planned economy that is dominated by state-run enterprises. This means that monetary appropriations are based on direct allocations made by the executive branch and most of the industries are owned by the government.¹⁴ Being constitutionally dedicated to socialism, Cuba provides its citizens with free education, healthcare, subsidised housing and food to make it more affordable for all Cubans.⁸ Nevertheless, food shortages cause Cubans to go without, more than most can handle.

The main economic sectors in Cuba are energy, agriculture and services (including tourism). Though most of Cuba's energy comes from fossil fuels, rolling blackouts caused the

¹³ El sistema político y electoral cubano. Cubasocialista.com.

¹⁴ Mandel, Ernest (1986). "In Defense of Socialist Planning" *New Left Review* 159: 5–37.

country to develop solar power to supplement energy.¹⁵ Cuba is a huge producer of sugarcane and is also rich in natural resources such as cobalt, nickel, iron ore, copper, salt, timber, silica, oil and petroleum.¹⁶ In the 1990s, tourism surpassed sugar as Cuba's number one foreign economic exchange, and to this day Cuba's third largest export is their famous hand rolled cigars.⁸

The average monthly wage in Cuba is equivalent to 30 US dollars.¹⁷ Due to a shrinking economy in 1994, Cuba allowed the American dollar to be used and since then there has been a shift in the Cuban economy. Cubans now engage in the private selling of agricultural products as well as participate in the black market which has caused an increase in under-the-table incomes.⁸ Nevertheless, poverty is something that most Cuban people suffer from, and they rely heavily of the socialized and subsidized goods and services they receive from the government in order to survive.

Cuban government welfare programs are numerous and include: La bodega which is where Cubans go to redeem coupons for rice, sugar, oil, matches and other foodstuffs including rum; La coppelia, a government-owned facility offering ice cream, juice and sweets; La farmacia, low-priced medicine, with the lowest costs anywhere in the world; Etecsa, which is the national telephone service provider; La feria, a weekly market owned by the government; Cervecería Bucanero, a beverage manufacturer, providing both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages; and Ciego Montero, the main soft-drink and beverage distributor.⁸ Medical care is also free and there are housecall doctors who attend to the elderly and disabled.⁸ This is what

¹⁵ Guevara-Stone, L. (2009). "La Revolucion Energetica: Cuba's Energy Revolution", Renewable Energy World International Magazine.

¹⁶ Spadoni, Paolo. "Cuban Economic Policies, 1990—2010: Achievements and Shortcomings." *The Oxford Handbook of Latin American Political Economy* (2012): 168.

¹⁷ "Cuba - The comandante's last move". (2008). *The Economist*. Retrieved from <http://www.economist.com/node/10727899>

sustains most Cubans who cannot afford to buy products that are not subsidized by the government.

Part of the socialized system in Cuba makes all education free, including University, and it is a quality education.⁸ As a result of the Cuban Literacy Campaign of 1961, the literacy rate in Cuba climbed from 60 percent to 96 percent in the span of one year.¹⁸ Given that the campaign was launched during a severe economic depression, (the beginning of the U.S. embargo), this figure is extremely impressive. Currently the literacy rate in Cuba remains around the 97th percentile, with approximately ten percent of the nation's central budget being allocated to educational expenses, compared to just two percent in the United States.¹⁸ A college education is free and often available to not only graduating high school students, but distance learning is also available for workers and parents.¹⁹ While Cuba continues to be one of the most destitute countries in the region and lacks basic resources, it still leads Latin America in primary education in terms of standardized testing.¹⁹

E. Media Environment

1. Isolationism / Lack of Access

Cuban citizens live in a state of isolation from the outside world. The strict control and manipulation by the government over the media will cause serious barriers to overcoming stereotypes and prejudice against the United States. Propaganda has played a large role in the "psychological warfare" between the two countries.¹ The Cuban government initially began by spreading anti-American messages across Cuba. In response to these messages, the U.S.

¹⁸ Griffiths, Tom G. "Fifty Years of Socialist Education in Revolutionary Cuba." *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Research* 15.2 (2009): 45-64. Print.

¹⁹ Marquis, Christopher. "Cuba Leads Latin America in Primary Education, Study Finds," *New York Times*, 14 December 2001.

conversely created a vast campaign against Fidel Castro, creating volumes of literature and films that were intended to bring about change in the Castro regime, but which ultimately failed.¹ In fact, the United States created a radio news station called “Voice of Free Cuba”, which funded an airdrop of leaflets with explicit instructions of how to overthrow the government.¹ This tactic was not well received.

In response, in 1964 Fidel Castro wrote to U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson and said,

“I seriously hope that Cuba and the United States can eventually respect and negotiate our differences. I believe that there are no areas of contention between us that cannot be discussed and settled within a climate of mutual understanding. But first, of course, it is necessary to discuss our differences. I now believe that this hostility between Cuba and the United States is both unnatural and unnecessary, and it can be eliminated.”²⁰

Nevertheless, to this day, Cuba is littered with propaganda against the U.S. and actively works to create negative perceptions of the United States in the minds of its citizens.

The Internet in Cuba is among the most tightly controlled in the world.²⁰ It is characterized by a low number of connections, limited bandwidth, and high censorship.²¹ The Internet in Cuba has idled since its introduction circa 2000 due to a lack of funding, close government restrictions, the U.S. embargo and high costs.²¹ The situation began to slowly improve starting in 2007. Government owned Internet cafes now offer Internet access, although the Internet is still illegal in private homes.²¹ In 2014, Cuba had an Internet penetration rate of 30 percent. In 2015, the Cuban government opened the first public wifi hotspots in 35 public

²⁰ "Cuba Statistics." *Cuba Statistics*. UNICEF, 2 Mar. 2015. Web. 04 Apr. 2016.

²¹ Oppmann, Patrick. "Public WiFi Comes to Cuba, at Least in 35 Spots." *CNN*. Cable News Network, 16 July 2015. Web. 04 Apr. 2016.

locations.²² They also increased speeds for Internet access at state-run cybercafes and reduced prices to appeal to a greater amount of tourists.²² However, “not surprisingly, computer-literate young people are adept at finding ways around government rules and regulations.”²¹ As a result, public discourse will eventually have no problem flourishing with democratic and new political ideas of all kinds.

2. News Media Environment in Cuba

The media environment in Cuba is one of the most heavily regulated outlets in the world, with many journalists imprisoned for reporting factual stories regarding the lack of a free press in Cuba.²³ The Cuban government continues to repress dissent and discourage public criticism. It now relies less on long-term prison sentences to punish its critics, but short-term arbitrary arrests of human rights defenders, independent journalists, and others have increased dramatically in recent years.²³ Other repressive tactics employed by the government include beatings, public acts of shaming, and the termination of employment.²²

Additionally, mass media as a whole is grossly underwhelming. The nation features only 3 major newspapers and only 10 television channels, two of which are purely educational.²³ While it is generally safe to say that the monopoly on the circulation of information exercised by the Cuban state is by no means absolute, there are not enough surveys to determine how much access Cubans have to other sources of information.²⁴ Therefore more research must be conducted to determine and hone in on these outlets as a way to spread U.S. ideologies.

²² "Cuba." *Americas: Cuba*. Human Rights Watch, 20 Mar. 2016. Web. 04 Apr. 2016. <<https://www.hrw.org/americas/cuba>>.

²³ Marreiro, F. (2014, July 6). Continuity and Change in the Cuban Media under Raúl Castro. Retrieved April 24, 2016

In order to implement the democratic objectives of the U.S., we must first develop a stronger news and media system across Cuba. This can be done by spreading the resources of the Internet to individual households, empowering them to make educated decisions regarding their civil rights. Having access to essential information about the different opportunities and perspectives will eventually lead the Cuban people to create open discourse among one another.

II. Cuban Foreign Policy

Cuban foreign policy has been dependent on many variables since converting to communism, but most notably, it has had to deal with historically antagonistic relations with the United States. During the Cold War, Cuba was allied with the USSR and was well protected by that super power.²⁴ Although Cuba still maintains relations with Russia, with the fall of the Soviet Union, Cuba lost extensive Soviet subsidies and its primary trading partner.²⁵ As a result, Cuba became comparatively isolated in the 1990's and has since shifted to making bilateral cooperations through trade and political relations with other Latin American countries such as Venezuela and Mexico.²⁵ Nevertheless, Cuba has barely been able to sustain an economy that generates enough to provide for its citizens. All the while, continued tensions between Cuba and the EU as well as CARICOM have led to the rise of differing foreign policy objectives.

A. Cuban-Russian Relations

Cuba and Russia have a unique history because of their long time alignment during the existence of the Soviet Union based on their shared political philosophies of communism. Diplomatic ties between Cuba and the Soviet Union became very important for Cuba after the revolution, and the USSR quickly became Cuba's strongest ally. Cuba was desperate for a

²⁴ Joseph, Gilbert M.; Spenser, Daniela (2008). *In from the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

trading relationship and although the Soviet Union did not believe that Cuba would be successful in opposing the United States, it did trade energy to Cuba for sugar.²⁵ After the failed U.S. Bay of Pigs attack of Cuba in 1961, the Soviet Union congratulated Cuba, admiring its tenacity and commending its Socialist Republic.²⁶

At the height of the Cold War, the USSR responded to NATO's strategic placement of missiles by ordering the deployment of missiles off the Cuban coast. U.S. President John F. Kennedy responded to the threat by ensuring a proportional response to the USSR should Cuba attack the U.S.²⁶ Ultimately, Kennedy unilaterally negotiated a disarmament with the Soviet Union and circumvented what it commonly referred to as the Cuban Missile Crisis.²⁷ This disarmament agreement that occurred without Cuba's consent bruised Castro's ego and soured relations between Cuba and the Soviet Union slightly, but Cuba's reliance on the power of the USSR was unwavering. However, as the USSR become ever more unstable, so was its ability to financially support its ally Cuba, and relations began to deteriorate accordingly.

Ultimately, the USSR dissolved, and with it, so did the large amount of aid that Cuba had become accustomed to receiving from the once superpower ally. However, Cuba having few long term allies, has been able to maintain their relations to Russia since its reestablishment and continues to support Russia under Putin's leadership since 2000. In 2014, Putin visited Cuba and announced plans to invest in its offshore oil industry.²⁷ Though the relationship between Cuba and Russia is not what it once was, it would be a misstep to negate its importance when forming new relations with Cuba.

²⁵ Pérez, Jr., L.A. (1991). "Cuba: Between Reform & Revolution" Chapter 12, S. 7 Pgs. 381-387. Retrieved from www.historyofcuba.com/history/havana/lperez2.htm

²⁶ 1962: World relief as Cuban missile crisis ends. BBC News. Retrieved from news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/october/28/newsid_2621000/2621915.stm

²⁷ Orsi, Peter (11 July 2014). "Putin kicks off Latin America tour with Cuba stop". *Associated Press*. The Big Story.

B. Cuban-Venezuelan Relations

Cuba and Venezuela have had very good relations since former President Hugo Chávez took office in 1999.²⁸ Both are Latin American countries that share a close cultural and political proximity, a common language and a common strive to uphold the ideals of socialism. When Socialist President Hugo Chávez was elected in 1999, his candidacy was based on a plan for radical change. In Geoffrey Wiseman's book, *Isolate or Engage*, he explains that "Chávez also assailed and defied the United States as the 'Empire' that, he argued, has historically oppressed Latin America."²⁹ Chávez had close ties to Fidel Castro of Cuba and held him and his country as a role model.²⁹ Castro was also open about demonizing the U.S., and Chávez violated the U.S. sanctions on Cuba numerous times.

Due to the close personal nature of the two leaders in the past, Cuba and Venezuela have had a strong trading relationship. They both used their comparative economic advantages to help one another by trading for goods of sectors where their own production capabilities are lacking. While Cuba is in constant need of its energy, Venezuela is naturally rich in oil; furthermore, there are an abundant number of medical professionals in Cuba that can aid Venezuela's lack of trained doctors. In an article published by the Economist, the system of trade between Cuba and Venezuela is described as "a web of barter deals, up to 20,000 Cuban doctors, sports trainers and security specialists work in Venezuela; in return Mr. Chávez has provided the island with 92,000 barrels per day of oil, and with other aid worth some \$800 million in 2006 and \$1.5 billion in 2007, according to a recent book by Germán Sánchez, Cuba's ambassador in Caracas."²⁹

²⁸ "Venezuela ends upbeat Cuba visit". BBC News (2005). Retrieved from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/4179050.stm>

Venezuela has provided an abundance of aid to Cuba which has boosted its economy in desperate times.

Since the death of Venezuelan leader Hugo Chávez in 2013, Cuba has taken to looking elsewhere for economic support. It was in part the impetus for their newly strengthened trading relations with Mexico. It was also a contributing factor to why Cuba is increasingly more willing to normalize relations with the United States.

C. Cuban-Mexican Relations

Cuba and Mexico's relationship began long before the Cuban Revolution, during the Batista dictatorship that ruled Cuba before the overthrow in 1959. During that time, revolutionaries such as Fidel Castro and Che Guevara fled to Mexico for safe haven as they planned the coup that ultimately converted Cuba to communism. Geographically, Mexico served as an advantageous staging area for the Cuban Revolution.²⁹ As a result of the Cuban government overthrow, The Organization of American States (OAS), which served to settle inter-American disputes, expelled Cuba in 1962 and from then on, Mexico was the only Latin American country to maintain diplomatic relations with Cuba during the Cold War.³⁰

In spite of their sustained support for Cuba throughout the bipolar global conflict, Mexico was still inescapably beholden to the power United States as its neighbor, hegemon, and largest trading partner. Contrarily, Cuba's communism caused the island nation to side with the like-minded Soviet Union. The two countries modern relationship is therefore shaped as a result of the influences the two superpowers exerted over them during the Cold War. Regardless of

²⁹ "Cuba Overview." Congressional Digest 92, No. 7 (September, 2013): 2–32. Academic Search Premier.

³⁰ "Mexican Foreign Minister Visits Cuba". Americas Quarterly. September 12, 2013. Retrieved from <http://www.americasquarterly.org/content/mexican-foreign-minister-visits-cuba>

Mexico's latent support for the communist Cuban government and its never ceasing relations with China and the USSR, Mexico always publicly supported the U.S. and secretly spied on Cuba throughout the Cold War, in an attempt to maintain good relations with the United States.²⁵ The dual nature of Mexico's foreign policy at this time was a tricky balance to maintain. However, Mexico knew it would suffer great consequences if it dared openly defy its powerful neighbor to the north.

In spite of Mexico's national stance of dependency on an alliance with the United States, domestically, leftist ideological groups has always been salient and continued to flourish in the form of activism by the Mexican Communist Party. Since the late 19th century, Mexico has had a large communist supporter group, and in 1911 the official Mexican Communist Party was formed.³¹ Since the Party's creation, many of its members and supporters have shifted to more moderate leftist groups but there has always been and will always be Mexican supporters of communist Cuba.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, relations between Cuba and Mexico made a turn for the worse when Cuba began openly criticizing Mexico. As a result, Mexico withdrew its ambassador to Cuba in 1998.³² Then in 2002, Mexican leader Vicente Fox, refused to allow the presence of Cuba's leader, Castro, at a UN Summit to protect the interests of the U.S. President George W. Bush and urged the delegation to vote in favor of openly criticizing Cuba about human rights violations.³³ These actions on the part of Mexico were seen as egregious in the eyes

³¹ Aguilar Camín, Héctor; Meyer, Lorenzo (1993). *In the shadow of the Mexican revolution: contemporary Mexican history, 1910-1989*. Translations from Latin America series. Austin, TX, USA: University of Texas Press.

³² Andrew Cawthorne (December 11, 1998). "Cuba tries to defuse spat with Mexico over Castro". Cubanet.

³³ "Mexico's Fox apologises to Castro". BBC News. April 25, 2002. Retrieved from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/1946089.stm>

of Cuba, and relations did not improve until a new Mexican leadership, a decade later, took a different approach.

In 2012, Mexican President Felipe Calderon visited Havana in an attempt to improve relations between the two nations by proposing a trading relationship.³⁴ Since then, Cuba and Mexico have formed further bilateral cooperation in the commercial exchange of energy technology and medical professionals, much like Cuba did with Venezuela. Today, Cuba's biggest trading partner is Mexico.

D. Cuban-European Union Relations

Relations between Cuba and the European Union have been less than amicable in recent years, given the accusations of human rights abuses across the island at large. The Common Position governs EU relations with Cuba, as approved by the European Council of Ministers in 1996, which is updated every six months following regular evaluations.³⁵ According to the Common Position, "the primary objective of the European Union in its relations with Cuba is to encourage a process of transition to a pluralist democracy and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as sustainable recovery and improvement in the living standards of the Cuban people."³⁶ Cuba rejects the Common Position as interference in its internal affairs.

More recently, and in light of the thawing relations between Cuba and the United States, the EU has again attempted to reconcile differences with Cuba. A bilateral development cooperation resumed in 2008, and between then and 2014, the EU committed around 90M EUR in the fields of food security; hurricane response and disaster preparedness; environment;

³⁴ "Mexico's President Calderon Pays First Official Visit to Cuba". Los Angeles Times. April 11, 2012.

³⁵ European External Action Service. (2016, March 11). Retrieved April 24, 2016, from http://eeas.europa.eu/cuba/index_en.htm

³⁶ Quinn, R. "Common Position." *EUR-Lex*. Common Position, 2 Dec. 1996. Web. 04 Apr. 2016.

climate change and energy; culture and heritage; support to economic and social modernisation and management capacities.³⁶ As of March 11, 2016, the EU and Cuba have concluded their negotiations for a bilateral Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement (PDCA). This agreement involves three core chapters on political dialogue, cooperation and sector policy dialogue as well as trade and trade cooperation.³⁶ The PDCA will add to enhancing EU-Cuba relations, supplementing the process of "updating" the Cuban economy and society, promoting dialogue and cooperation to foster sustainable development, democracy and human rights, and finding common solutions to global challenges.³⁶

E. Cuba-CARICOM Relations

The Caribbean region occupies a central role in Cuba's foreign policy. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Cuba was forced to form alliances with new nations as a way to support their rapidly deteriorating economy.³⁸ As Cuba shares a common history of colonization and sugar plantation exploitation with its Caribbean neighbors, along with its geographic proximity, it is therefore imperative that these nations should cooperate.³⁷

Established in 1973, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) is an organization of 15 Caribbean nations and dependencies. CARICOM's main purposes are to promote economic integration and cooperation among its members, to ensure that the benefits of integration are equitably shared, and to coordinate foreign policy.³⁸ Its relationship with Cuba is important to the future of the island's success. While Cuba sustains diplomatic relations with all the CARICOM States, the country itself is not a Member State of CARICOM, nor is it an Associate

³⁷ CARICOM Caribbean Community. (2016, February 17). Retrieved April 24, 2016, from <http://www.caricom.org/>

³⁸ Martinez, J. L. (2014, May 1). Cuba and CARICOM in the Changing Environment.

Member.³⁷ The reasons Cuba has not requested membership into the community is multifold: it has concerns of restructuring its economic and political models, and it is also wary of the relationship that CARICOM has with the United States, a longstanding adversary of the island.³⁷ The cooperation between these nations has aided Cuba in many respects however. From providing trade opportunities to educational exchanges, the island has benefited in countless ways. It is believed that Cuba will enter into larger agreements with CARICOM in the coming days of the U.S. Cuba thaw.

III. U.S. Public Diplomacy in Cuba

The tensions between the United States and Cuba have begun to de escalate with the opening of a formal embassy in each respective country. Despite this recent open display of partnership, Americans have been living and working in Cuba at the American Interests Section in Havana for almost 40 years, with the inner workings much like that of an official embassy.³⁹ The American Interests Section, once physically owned by the Swiss Embassy, processes visas, hosts educational and cultural exchanges and accommodates VIP visits from the United States on a regular basis. While some form of diplomatic relations has been in place since 1977 following the revolution, it is only now that we will begin to see large changes in the way official business is conducted. By at least maintaining a channel of formal diplomatic relations, both countries are better positioned to reach the masses and generate support for policies.

Cuba has also had a longstanding no-contact policy, meaning that locals were strictly forbidden to develop relationships with Americans. This policy has led to frustration and anger

³⁹ "Cuba Overview." Congressional Digest 92, No. 7 (September, 2013): 2–32. Academic Search Premier.

on behalf of the American government, but also for the Cuban people. Recently, this policy has been lifted to allow for greater flexibility in forming partnerships with the Cuban people, creating a forum for discussion and exchange of ideas. By lifting this policy, it appears that conditions between the U.S. and Cuba could improve much sooner than once thought.

A. Pre-Revolution Public Diplomacy

Before the Cuban Revolution in 1959, diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Cuba were strong. The rise of General Fulgencio Batista in the 1930s to de facto leader and President of Cuba for two terms (1940–44 and 1952–59) led to an era of close cooperation between the governments of Cuba and the United States.⁴⁰ Furthermore, the United States and Cuba signed another Treaty of Relations in 1934, signaling a dedication to continued partnership and growth.⁴² The American Embassy in Havana functioned as a normal embassy should: processing visas, conducting cultural and educational exchanges, and aiding American expatriates residing in Cuba. All of these functions went away, however, as the failed overthrow of the Castro regime created tensions that eventually led the embassies to be shut down in each respective country in 1961.

B. Reestablished Relations in 1977

During the Carter administration, there was a thawing of relations between the two countries, and once again diplomatic exchange could be continued. While a formal embassy was never established, an “Interests Section” was created in its place in 1977.⁴¹ This Interests Section functioned similarly to that of an embassy, however, this time educational and cultural exchanges were still prohibited. Relations remained stagnant for many years following the

⁴⁰ John Pike. "Cuba". Globalsecurity.org. 21 December 2014.

Carter administration, and went through intermittent periods of souring relations depending on the current U.S. president in office. It was not until 2015 that we began to see formal diplomatic relations restored and the opening up of travel and trade.

C. Current Relations

The American Embassy was officially reestablished in Havana, Cuba on July 20th, 2015 and the Cuban Embassy was opened on this date in Washington, D.C. as well.⁴¹ Travel restrictions have been loosened to allow for greater flexibility in tourism. This will also help to offset the difficulties that many Cuban families face living abroad, as well as for expatriate Americans residing in Cuba. While currently there is still a financial, commercial, and economic embargo, it is merely a matter of time before the U.S. begins to lift the sanctions and open fair and free trade with the island.

IV. United States Interests in Cuba

Despite tensions between the two nations, the United States still has many interests in Cuba, to include but not limited to economic, cultural, and political concentrations. Economically, the United States seeks to re-establish trade relations, creating opportunities for both exports and imports with the small nation. Additionally, with the opening of tourism to American citizens, cultural ties may be formed that will help to bolster the relationship between the two nations as well. Arguably the largest interest that the United States has in Cuba is the spread of democracy through greater freedom of speech and of the press, and through fair and free elections that the Cuban people are directly involved in. Politically, the U.S. will face many

⁴¹ Baker, Peter (18 December 2014). "Obama Announces U.S. and Cuba Will Resume Relations". New York Times. Retrieved 18 December 2014.

challenges when attempting to exert these views onto the Cuban people, but it is a task that is not impossible. The U.S. must devise a proper public diplomacy strategy to deal with issues as they arise, as well as preemptively anticipate issues before they even surface. The following outlines the various interests of the United States in Cuba.

A. Economic Engagement

There are many economic opportunities for the United States in Cuba. Trade and tourism will play a huge role in the monetary and cultural exchange between the two nations. Cuba so closely neighbors the U.S. that it will quickly become one of the fastest growing travel destinations for U.S. tourists. Currently, Cuba has the goal of opening its economy to trade in the international markets and the United States wishes to be a strategic partner in achieving that objective. In order to do so, the United States must first lift the sanctions it levied on Cuba almost 50 years ago and begin negotiating agreements of commerce between the two states.

By engaging in economic exchanges, Cubans will learn more about the numerous opportunities the world market economy presents. In turn, they will be affected by the self-determinant perspectives fostered by those who participate in laissez faire economics. This type of exchange may begin to help Cubans develop a sense of awareness about the possibilities that are presented outside of Cuban communism and cause a shift among the population. Cubans will begin demanding more entitlements and protections of human, civil and economic rights.

Furthermore, by stimulating the Cuban economy and supplementing Cuban salaries, the poverty that the people suffer will be relieved. Given the ability to consume new products, Cubans will be able to make greater economic choices based on a higher standard of living. This

higher standard of living will result in a diversification of preferences and will be the driving force for expanded supply and demand, thus causing the nation to grow exponentially.

Ultimately, this will lead the Cubans to reach out to the United States in other ways, including through cultural and educational exchanges and democratic discourse. New trade relations and looser travel restrictions will present many new opportunities that will help to continue to promote the “people-to-people” interaction between Americans and Cubans.

B. Cultural and Educational Exchange

To develop mutual understanding through two way symmetrical communication for the purpose of forming long-term beneficial relationships, it is necessary to formulate programs that bring Cubans to the United States and Americans to Cuba. This type of exchange will enable the people of Cuba to participate in a world outside their small island nation, as well as give Americans the chance to work and study in a newly developing economy and foreign society.

Universities across the United States have expressed their interest in embracing Cuban students as a way to create dialogue between the two cultures.⁴³ Additionally, the University of Havana is one of several Cuban institutions that currently accepts American students as well.⁴² This cross-cultural exchange will facilitate collaboration between scholars and academics, creating a forum for free expression. In doing so, we can inspire these young men and women to think for themselves and initiate change at the grassroots level.

C. Cross Cultural Dialogue with the Diaspora

As a form of soft power, cultural diplomacy serves to aid the people of a foreign nation in developing an understanding of the nation’s ideals and institutions in an effort to build broad

⁴² Study Abroad in Havana. (2015, August 17). Retrieved April 30, 2016, from <https://www.apistudyabroad.com/programs/cuba/havana/>

support for economic and political goals.⁴³ Through exchanges of culture, the United States and Cuba can prosper and connect on a level beyond their political disagreements. Exchanges can be educational, artistic, or idealistic, but ultimately they serve to bring together diverse communities in the hopes of creating common ground.

Beyond formal programs of cultural exchange, it is also necessary for the Cuban-American diaspora to make efforts of their own to initiate the establishment of democratic institutions in Cuba. Cuba is becoming open to looser travel restrictions, which will allow for more of their citizens to relocate to the United States and vice versa. As a result, we may see an emerging diaspora that will work to change the cultural and political atmosphere in Cuba. Members of the Cuban-American population that are politically active in the United States can be the thought leaders of the future of progressive reform in Cuba.

D. Democratic Discourse

A democracy can not be sustained without outlets of information accessible to all people in the form of news media and in modern standards, the Internet. Historically, Cuba has had one of the most restrictive national press systems in the world. However, with help in the area of material infrastructure to be able to support a wide array of international broadcasting systems, Cuba will be able to join the global conversation and that dialogue will assuredly impact the hearts and minds of the populations. Currently, the biggest areas that Cuba could develop to promote discourse amongst its citizens would be newsprint and international radio broadcasts. As high-tech foundations are developed, the potential for the infiltration of televised media and the instantaneous exchange enabled by the Internet will be expanded.

⁴³ Maack, M. N. (2001). Books and Libraries as Instruments of Cultural Diplomacy in Francophone Africa during the Cold War. *Libraries & the Cultural Record*, 36(1), 58-86. doi:10.1353/lac.2001.0012

E. The Spread of Democracy

The spread of democracy is arguably the greatest priority of the United States in its dealings with Cuba. As a proponent of freedom, the U.S. must work tirelessly to help bring about political change for the people of Cuba. While the current system is violently opposed to democracy, it stands alone in its resolve to continue its communistic ways. All of the other nations in the region have converted to a democracy in some form or another, leaving Cuba outdated and lagging behind much of the modern world.

The United States is ideally equipped to assist the Cuban people in building their own democracy from the ground up. With free and fair access to the full spectrum of international news media, comes the platform with which to begin open democratic discussion of important social, economic and political issues. When people are enlightened by knowledge, they come together to form groups and organizations with a mission to affect change in the society they belong to.

IV. Public Diplomacy Recommendations: 5 Objectives and Tactics for Democracy in Cuba

A strengthened U.S.-Cuban diplomatic relationship can only succeed when both countries recognize each other's legitimacy and take steps to actively create common interests between both parties. This means garnering support from the global community to form partnerships that positively influence their attitudes about one another. The following recommendations are designed to enhance the United States influence on the Cuban political and socio economic system by establishing democratic institutions in Cuba.

A. Recommendation 1 - Open Economic Trade

One of the main objectives of the United States in regards to the Cuban economy is to begin a tourism and trade relationship. This will be done by lifting the sanctions placed upon Cuba, allowing them to trade freely and fairly with United States commercial businesses. In order to execute this, the United States and Cuba must enter into a free trade agreement to be signed by both parties. This will demonstrate each party's commitment to promoting economic exchange between the two nations. The target audience is the international economic community at large, as there will be many actors involved in the trade agreement, including the some of the Member States of NAFTA and CAFTA, the North American and Central American Free Trade Agreements.

Currently, the United States is moving to amend the language of NAFTA and CAFTA. Furthermore, our relationship with CARICOM will be a separate platform with which to leverage trade with all of Latin America and the United States. It will be the foundation for ushering in a new era of free trade between the nations of the Americas. Cuba will finally be able to join as a Member State of CARICOM, and enjoy the benefits of a formalized trading agreement between CARICOM and the United States. This agreement will ultimately replace NAFTA and CAFTA.

By opening up economic trade, the Cuban economy will begin to see greater profits and will experience a higher standard of living than they have in over 60 years. The best way to do this is to begin slowly, opening up the island to tourism and businesses centered around travel. By opening tourism, the island will see a large influx of American travelers. These tourists will shape the future of the economy in Cuba as more restaurants, hotels and resorts are built up at exponential rates.

Once a system is in place to support economic growth and sustainability, Cuba can begin to import goods and services from the United States, under the terms of the free trade agreement, at a relatively low price due to their proximity. Cargo ships will be the primary form of transport for goods, allowing for thousands of items to penetrate the economy. Products such as new vehicles, agriculture and farming equipment, and basic commodities that are currently hard to procure, such as toothpaste and shampoo, will make life easier for Cubans by providing them with a wide array of resources. Over time, more advanced products produced by high-tech industries will also make their way into Cuba, and this will surely usher in a new period of rapid globalization.

B. Recommendation 2 - Enhance Cultural Diplomacy and Exchanges

The second objective of the United States involvement in Cuba is to establish and strengthen cultural and educational exchanges. As a primary focus of the Department of State, funding for these programs exists in many countries across the globe already. In moving forward in establishing positive relations in Cuba, the State Department should establish several academic and cultural exchange programs for students from both nations to utilize and learn from. This will illuminate the basic principles necessary to bring about change in the government by the people.

Academic collegiate program benefits and stipends should be awarded to students looking to study abroad in each respective country. This will incentivise students to embrace alternative cultures and engage in scholarly discourse. By studying and learning together, these students can develop ideologies that they can then bring home with them and share with their communities. One initiative the United States has already seen success in, through working with

Cuba's longtime ally Venezuela, is the Fulbright Scholar Program.^{44 45} This program has enabled thousands of students to build a cross cultural understanding, bridging otherwise adversarial tensions between nations. The State Department should expand upon this program and apply it to Cuba, allowing both nations' students to enjoy the benefits of intellectual discourse.

Cultural programs should be extensive and should bring artists, musicians, and dancers from each country as a way to assimilate cultures. These programs have been proven to bridge gaps between nations and strengthen ties that could otherwise be overlooked. The State Department will be the forerunner of this initiative as well, by planning and organizing visits with the Cuban Cultural Society. In doing so, we can begin to form partnerships and common interests that will enable our people to collaborate together at a fundamental level.

C. Recommendation 3 - Generate Cross-Cultural Dialogue

In strengthening the cultural and educational ties across both nations, this will facilitate cross-cultural dialogue that will ultimately spark democratic discourse. As the primary objective of the United States is to establish democratic institutions, it is imperative that we engage the Cuban-American diaspora and influential Cuban thought leaders by generating blogs, discussion forums and organized meetings. These outlets for discourse will create a "people-to-people" based message that will resonate with the Cuban population, in a way that diplomats of the American government alone could not.

⁴⁴ Noted

⁴⁵ Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. (2015, July 9). Retrieved May 01, 2016, from <http://eca.state.gov/fulbright/country/venezuela>

In order to do this, it is necessary to research the communication habits of the Cuban communities living in the United States. By doing so, we will be able to determine how to effectively influence the diaspora to communicate with Cuban thought leaders, politicians and important figureheads. These individuals will be the citizen diplomats that bridge the gap between our two countries. As is the case with all good campaigns, this will require extensive research on behalf of the United States. Research will be conducted to understand public opinion that will help to shape the objectives and tactics of the campaign. By evaluating and understanding the communication habits of the Cuban people, we can better tailor our efforts to have a more lasting impact on the communities at large.

D. Recommendation 4 - Enhance Cuban Freedom of Speech and Press

A cross-cultural dialogue among citizens of two nations is just the first step in participating in a truly expansive international democratic discourse. In this day and age, the 24-hour news cycle causes a dynamic global discussion. Until Cubans are able to access and keep up with this reality, they will be unable to participate in the international system. Without such advancements, they will not be able to establish a functional democracy. This is why the introduction of open Internet, media and libraries is of the utmost importance. In establishing these technological advances, the Cubans will be able to express their political thought and make educated decisions regarding the fate of their nation.

To support open access to mediated information in Cuba, the United States must call upon the international community to equip Cuba with the resources it needs to enter the 21st century of communications technologies. International agencies such as UNESCO, The United

Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and UNAOC, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, are specifically designed to

“Convene editors and owners to raise awareness around sensitive cross cultural issues (religion, diversity, migration, etc) and establish a platform for dialogue; Offer skill building and training exercises for journalists and provide a unique cross cultural approach both on content and format; Monitor media content and coverage of cross-cultural issues; Increase journalists and public understanding of complex cross cultural issues through online resources.”⁴⁶

These are the fundamental necessities in building the technological platform for mediated information outlets. Therefore, the United States should look to the EU and other major members of the UN to support an initiative to send in specialized agencies to enhance the Cuban communications infrastructure by providing raw materials and assigning regulations to Cuban broadcasting. From this, emerging news media outlets will be developed. This also extends to print media as well as more expanded libraries. In liberating the freedom of the press and freedom of speech, finally the Cuban people can express their dissent toward the current political structure and can rise up to be a voice for change.

E. Recommendation 5 - Establish Democratic Institutions

All of the previous objectives and tactics have led up to the establishment of democratic institutions, which is the primary objective of the United States in their newly developed dealings with Cuba. In order to ensure the success of these institutions, it is recommended that Cubans, empowered by the knowledge they have gained from democratic discourse and media

⁴⁶ Media Program - UNAOC. Retrieved May 01, 2016, from <http://www.unaoc.org/communities/media-program>

access, should create their own civil and human rights protection agencies that will secure the basic freedoms afforded to all free peoples.

United as an informed citizenry, Cubans can finally begin to implement changes in their government. This new era will allow for political dissenters to speak freely without facing repercussions from the government. Additionally, Cubans will be able to write and report the news in a way that is fair and balanced and reflects a range of opinions--rather than biased favorably toward the one party government-- as it is now.

The target audience involves not only Cuban thought leaders and head officials, but most importantly in any democracy, it includes the common Cuban citizenry. Through open media and relaxed democratic discourse, all people will be involved in the political change of the country. Ultimately this will lead to building strong democratic institutions, amending the restrictions created by the Cuban Constitution, and reflect the precepts of a government by the people, for the people.

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