

PRENSA LIBRE CUBA

WEEKLY SUMMARY

AUGUST 9–15, 2026

This week's top news stories from Cuba and around the world.

This weekly summary in PDF format is part of Prensa Libre Cuba's commitment to Cubans' right to be informed. In a country where official media outlets conceal, distort, or silence the truth, we offer this service so that citizens can access verified news and independent analysis. Since the PLC website cannot be viewed in Cuba due to censorship, we have chosen to distribute this PDF version so that the information reaches—unblocked—those who need it most.

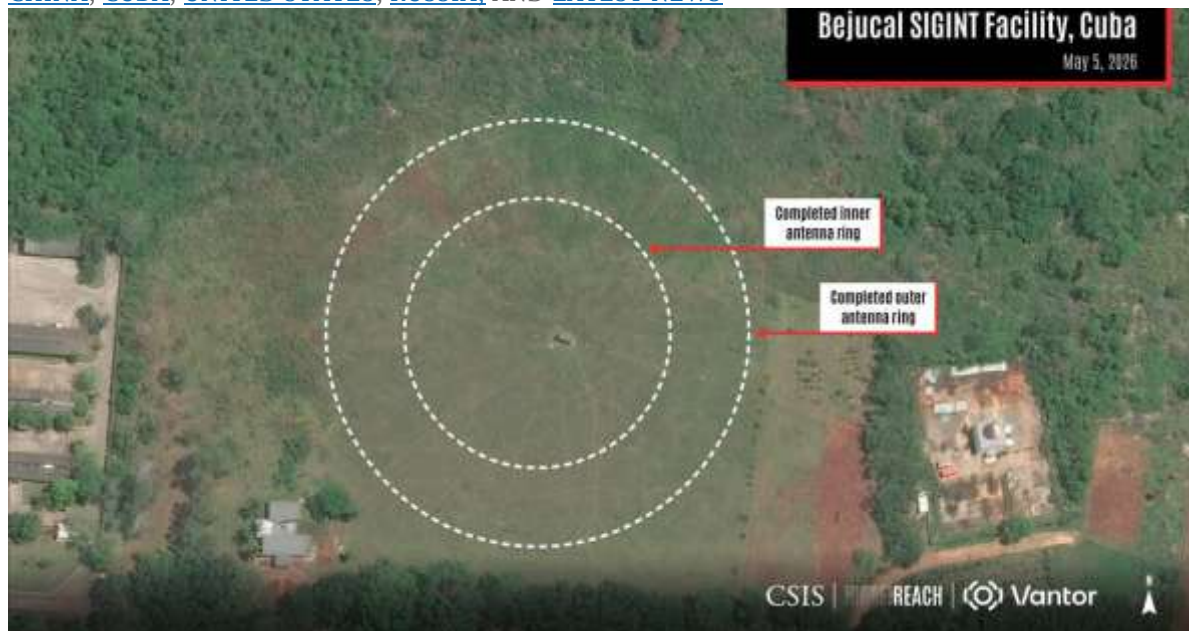
More than six decades later, the name *Prensa Libre* is coming back to life. **Prensa Libre Cuba** is launching online with a mission that honors that republican tradition: to provide a space for information, analysis, and debate that supports the public at a decisive moment in our history.

Our goal is not only to report on the daily reality of Cuba—its challenges, its tensions, its hopes—but also **to open a broad and pluralistic forum on the country's future**. We want to be a place where ideas are discussed, perspectives are compared, and proposals are developed for a **democratic transition** that is already part of the collective imagination of millions of Cubans both on and off the island.

The New Strategic Stronghold: How Russia and China Are Consolidating Their Presence in Cuba

BY PLC ON AUGUST 15, 2026, 7:46 A.M. |

[CHINA](#), [CUBA](#), [UNITED STATES](#), [RUSSIA](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



The new, extensive circular network of antennas built in Bejucal, south of Havana. Photo: CSIS

RUSSIA AND CHINA-CUBA

Havana. PLC | The presence of Russia and China in Cuba is no longer a matter of symbolic cooperation or a belated echo of the Cold War. In recent weeks, both countries have strengthened their influence on the island through a combination of material aid, operational expansion, and the modernization of intelligence capabilities that are altering the strategic balance in the Caribbean. The delivery of Russian ambulances and a shipment of 15,000 metric tons of Chinese rice is merely the tip of the iceberg in a deeper process: the consolidation of Cuba as a platform for surveillance, geopolitical pressure, and the projection of power against the United States.

The Russian donations, originating from St. Petersburg, include three ambulances equipped with modern medical technology and destined for Havana, Matanzas, and Santiago de Cuba. The delivery, delayed by logistical difficulties, comes at a critical moment for the Cuban healthcare system, whose ambulance technical availability rate barely reaches 22%, as Miguel Díaz-Canel himself acknowledged. The Chinese aid, for its part, consists of a massive shipment of rice intended to alleviate the food crisis affecting the population. Both contributions are presented as gestures of solidarity, but they are part of a broader strategy of sustained presence in essential sectors of the island.

However, the true extent of Russian and Chinese influence lies in the less visible realm of electronic intelligence. Research by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), satellite imagery, and reports confirmed by media outlets such as [The Wall Street Journal](#) document the existence of four espionage bases operated by China in Bejucal, Wajay, Calabazar, and El Salao, in addition to two Russian GLONASS stations. These facilities, which have been modernized in recent years, enable the interception of military communications, financial flows, and space telemetry originating from the United States, including operations linked to Cape Canaveral.

The expansion is not limited to infrastructure. U.S. intelligence sources cited by international media report that Russia and China have tripled their technical personnel in Cuba between 2023 and 2026. This increase is not due to routine maintenance but rather to an operational expansion that includes next-generation antennas, encrypted links, mobile stations, and real-time analysis capabilities. Cuba's geographical proximity—less than 200 kilometers from Florida—makes these facilities a prime vantage point for monitoring U.S. military bases, maritime and air traffic, and government communications.

Havana denies the existence of foreign bases on its territory, but independent reports and satellite imagery contradict that account. For Moscow and Beijing, Cuba represents a strategic enclave that allows them to project influence in the Western Hemisphere and exert pressure on Washington from within its own geopolitical sphere. The logic is clear: if the United States seeks to contain Russia in Europe and China in the Pacific, both countries respond by strengthening their presence in the Caribbean, a region that has historically been sensitive for U.S. security.

The combination of material aid, technical cooperation, and intelligence expansion creates a new scenario. Cuba not only receives support for critical sectors such as health and food but also becomes an operational hub within the global competition among major powers. The island once again occupies a central place in 21st-century geopolitics, not because of its economy or diplomatic clout, but because of its strategic value on the map.

In this context, the strengthened presence of Russia and China in Cuba is not an isolated incident, but a structural shift that is redefining the regional landscape. For Washington, it represents a direct challenge; for Havana, a lifeline amid the crisis; for Moscow and Beijing, an opportunity to project power in the United States' backyard. The Caribbean, once again, is becoming a frontier of tension and the stage for a silent dispute that is already underway.

Washington recalibrates its pressure on Cuba as the military option fades

BY PLC ON AUGUST 15, 2026, 7:24 A.M. |
[CUBA](#), [UNITED STATES](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



The CSIS, one of the most influential strategic think tanks in the United States, notes that the military option exists as a hypothesis, but that its viability has diminished in recent weeks. Photo: U.S. Embassy in Havana. © PLC.

UNITED STATES-CUBA

Stockholm. PLC | U.S. policy toward Cuba is undergoing a period of strategic redefinition. Although the Trump administration maintains the rhetoric that “all options are on the table,” the most recent analyses agree that the military option has lost momentum and that Washington is betting on sustained economic and political pressure, designed to wear down the Cuban regime without precipitating—at least for now—a direct intervention. This recalibration does not imply a relaxation of policy; on the contrary, it is part of a strategy of maximum pressure aimed at forcing Havana to accept structural changes or, ultimately, to open the door to a political transition.

According to reports from [France 24](#) and leaks compiled by [Axios](#), the White House has adopted an “accelerationist” approach toward Cuba: progressively increasing economic, diplomatic, and operational pressure to hasten the regime’s decline without causing an immediate collapse. The key to this offensive is the energy blockade. Following Nicolás Maduro’s capture in Caracas on January 3, Washington cut off the flow of Venezuelan oil to Cuba and pressured Mexico to do the same, exacerbating the energy crisis already plaguing the island. The drop in shipments

from Caracas— —has led to longer power outages, food shortages, and growing social tension—a scenario that senior U.S. officials view as a window of vulnerability for the Cuban government.

Added to this pressure is the offensive against GAESA, the military-business conglomerate that forms the backbone of the regime's economic power. The executive order signed by Trump on May 1 affects not only U.S. companies but also foreign firms with ties to GAESA. Shipping companies such as CMA CGM and Hapag-Lloyd, as well as the Canadian mining company Sherritt International, have reportedly already suspended operations related to Cuba, according to sources cited by *Axios*. The intention is clear: to isolate the economic apparatus controlled by the Armed Forces internationally and to raise the costs of sustaining the current model.

At the same time, Washington has intensified its military presence in the Caribbean, though without crossing the threshold of direct action. The deployment of the aircraft carrier USS *Nimitz* and its strike group, reconnaissance flights over the island, and the continued presence of a Marine Expeditionary Unit since January are all part of a preventive deterrence strategy. The CSIS, one of the most influential strategic think tanks in the United States, notes that the military option exists as a hypothetical scenario, but that its feasibility has diminished in recent weeks. CSIS analysts describe five possible scenarios, and the most likely—at least in the short term—is a sustained pressure campaign: a prolonged economic and political siege aimed at fracturing the regime's internal cohesion without resorting to an invasion.

There are two reasons for this shift. On the one hand, the Trump administration faces the political risk that a military intervention would spark international condemnation and result in a humanitarian cost that would be difficult to justify. On the other hand, Cuba's power structure—which is more cohesive than Venezuela's—makes a military operation more complex and less predictable. Unlike Caracas, where institutional collapse facilitated the operation to capture Maduro, Havana maintains a coordinated control network linking the Communist Party, the Armed Forces, the security apparatus, and GAESA. Even Raúl Castro's persistent influence, despite his advanced age, continues to be viewed by Washington as a decisive factor in the balance of power.

However, the reduction in military pressure does not imply an immediate diplomatic opening. The current strategy seeks to raise the costs of the regime's resistance to a point where part of the ruling elite will consider an orderly transition. For Washington, such a transition should include economic liberalization, the release of political prisoners, a reduction in the influence of external actors such as Russia, China, and Iran, and, in the long term, a government that adopts a cooperative stance toward the United States. The question being raised in domestic and for n

policy circles is whether this change could occur with sectors of the current regime or whether the White House will ultimately opt for its complete replacement.

In this context, the rhetoric that “all options are on the table” serves as a tool for exerting pressure rather than as a declaration of war. Washington maintains this latent threat to force Havana to negotiate from a position of weakness, but actual developments point toward a protracted strategy of economic strangulation, international isolation, and political attrition. The military option has not disappeared, but it has become a deterrent, useful for shaping the regime’s behavior and sending signals to its foreign allies.

The island thus finds itself at a critical juncture: caught between an unprecedented internal crisis and a U.S. offensive that combines sanctions, diplomatic pressure, and a symbolic military presence. The question is not only what Washington will do, but how long Havana can hold out before being forced to rethink its course. Cuba’s immediate future hangs in the balance today amid this tension—between threat and negotiation, between pressure and the possibility of conditional dialogue.

Washington Steps Up Pressure on Cuba with a Calculated Warning

BY PLC ON AUGUST 15, 2026, 7:00 A.M. |
[CUBA](#), [UNITED STATES](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



The warning is part of Washington's broader concern over the presence of Russia, China, and Iran in Latin America. Photo of the destroyer USS Gridley in Panama. Social media

UNITED STATES-CUBA

Panama City. PLC | The new warning from U.S. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth, issued from Panama, has added another layer of tension to the already complex relationship between Washington and Havana. The statement—“all options are on the table, including military options”—was not only reported by international media but also amplified by the U.S. Embassy in Cuba itself, which shared it on its channels aimed at the Cuban public.

The statements were made during activities related to multinational military exercises and within the framework of the Coalition of the Americas Against Cartels (A3C). When asked by a reporter whether the Pentagon could play a military role in Cuba, Hegseth declined to rule out that possibility. “Cuba would do well to pay attention to President Trump’s willingness to assert U.S. strategic prerogatives,” he stated, insisting that the island “is no match for the United States.”

Hours later, speaking from the destroyer USS *Gridley*, the message was even more direct: “We want more cooperation from Cuba, whether they like it or not.” Hegseth accused the Cuban government of allowing foreign actors to use the island to spy on the United States for years and warned that Washington “will not tolerate that kind of malign influence in our hemisphere.” In his remarks, he framed the Trump

administration's stance within what he called the "Trump Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine," a tougher reinterpretation of the historic U.S. hemispheric policy.

The warning is part of a broader concern in Washington over the presence of Russia, China, and Iran in Latin America. According to Hegseth, those countries have sought to expand their influence by taking advantage of U.S. weakness or absence in the region, but the situation is reportedly changing: Latin American governments—including Cuba—"understand where the balance of power lies."

The harshness of the message contrasts with recent contacts between U.S. and Cuban officials that had hinted at the possibility of a less confrontational relationship if Havana were to modify some of its policies. In this context, the phrase "all options are on the table" also serves as a means of pressure: a reminder that Washington is keeping the military option open, but that this threat can be used to push Cuba toward negotiations on terms more favorable to the United States.

The decision by the U.S. Embassy in Havana to publicize the message reinforces that interpretation. By bringing Hegseth's words directly to the Cuban public, Washington is not only warning the government but also seeking to shape domestic perceptions of the balance of power and the regime's room for maneuver.

At a time when the region is undergoing a strategic realignment and Cuba is in the midst of a deep crisis, Washington's calculated ambiguity—a mix of threats, diplomatic pressure, and conditional openness—appears aimed at keeping Havana on high alert while simultaneously forcing it to consider negotiations that would reduce the influence of external actors on the island.

DR Demands Departure of Cuban Diplomats Following Signs of Intelligence Activities Incompatible with Their Mission

BY PLC ON AUGUST 14, 2026, 10:09 P.M. |
[CUBA](#), [LATIN AMERICA](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



According to the newspaper El Día, high-level sources with direct knowledge of the case confirmed that several Cuban officials allegedly exploited their diplomatic credentials to carry out activities linked to the Cuban state's intelligence and security services. Photo: social media

DR-CUBA-ESPIONAGE

Santo Domingo. PLC | The forced departure of nine Cuban diplomats from the Dominican Republic—ordered within a seven-day deadline and communicated with unusual discretion by the Dominican Foreign Ministry—has ceased to be a purely administrative episode and has become a symptom of deeper tensions in the Caribbean. What initially appeared to be an unexplained measure—and which Havana denounced as an act of subservience to Washington—has been reconstructed by Dominican diplomatic sources with a much more delicate nuance: alleged intelligence activities carried out by members of the Cuban mission on Dominican soil.

According to the newspaper [El Día](#), high-level sources with direct knowledge of the case confirmed that several Cuban officials had allegedly exploited their diplomatic credentials to carry out activities linked to the Cuban state's intelligence and security services. These actions, deemed incompatible with the functions of a diplomatic mission, prompted the request for their withdrawal. Dominican authorities, however, avoided the most severe measure provided for in the Vienna Convention—declaring someone persona non grata—and opted for an equally legitimate mechanism: requesting the withdrawal of personnel through diplomatic channels, thereby formally preserving bilateral relations.

The Dominican government insists that the decision does not imply a deterioration in ties with Cuba. The Cuban mission will continue to operate with the rest of its accredited staff, and the Foreign Ministry has emphasized that it will handle the matter with “due discretion.” But discretion, in this case, does not diminish the political significance of the gesture. Requesting the withdrawal of nearly a dozen diplomats is a high-impact measure, one that is only taken when a state considers that its national security has been violated or put at risk.

The timing of this move, coinciding with the defection of four Cuban athletes following the 2026 Central American and Caribbean Games in Santo Domingo, sparked immediate speculation. Sources consulted by *El Día* were categorical: the two events are in no way related. The diplomats’ departure stems from a separate, prior process based on information held by Dominican authorities. The athletes’ defection—a recurring phenomenon at international sporting events—is said not to have influenced the decision.

The official statement from the Dominican Ministry of Foreign Affairs merely confirmed the request for withdrawal and noted that the measure is based on the host state’s powers under the Vienna Convention. It offered no further details, citing the confidential nature of diplomatic communications. As of press time, Cuba had not publicly explained the reasons that, according to available information, prompted the Dominican decision. Its initial reaction—accusing Santo Domingo of acting under pressure from the United States—now seems insufficient in light of revelations about alleged intelligence activities.

The episode takes place within a regional context marked by a growing estrangement of several Latin American governments from Havana. The Dominican Republic had already sent clear signals: Cuba’s exclusion from the 10th Summit of the Americas, the change in its vote at the UN regarding the U.S. embargo, and statements by President Luis Abinader questioning the democratic nature of the Cuban state. The expulsion of diplomats, though presented as a technical and discreet measure, deepens this shift.

What happened in Santo Domingo reveals a silent conflict that goes beyond formal diplomacy. The presence of Cuban intelligence agencies in the Caribbean has historically been a sensitive issue, and the Dominican decision suggests that the government considered that certain lines had been crossed. Havana, for its part, faces a scenario of growing isolation in the region, where several countries have begun to reassess their relations with the regime.

The departure of the Cuban diplomats does not sever ties between the two countries, but it does mark a turning point. In diplomacy, silences often speak louder than statements. And in this case, the Dominican government’s official silence, combined

with revelations from internal sources, sends an unequivocal message: Santo Domingo will not tolerate activities it considers a threat to its security, even if it prefers to avoid the upheaval of a formal break in relations.

The first round of talks in Venezuela yields partial agreements as pressure mounts for a genuine transition

BY PLC ON AUGUST 14, 2026, 12:04 P.M. |

[VENEZUELA](#)



Photo taken from social media. Jorge Rodríguez, president of the National Assembly and brother of interim President Delcy Rodríguez. He is the ruling party's chief negotiator and the figure who signs the final communiqué on behalf of the regime. In the background of the photo is Dinorah Figuera, president of the National Assembly elected in 2015. She heads the opposition delegation recognized by the United States and is the signatory of the document on behalf of the opposition.

VENEZUELA-DIALOGUE

Caracas. PLC | The first round of negotiations between the Venezuelan regime and a faction of the opposition concluded on Wednesday with limited agreements and no progress on the central issues of the democratic transition. After a week marked by secrecy, the delegations announced commitments to assist the victims of the twin earthquakes of June 24 and to begin a transformation of the judicial system, as confirmed by the parties in official statements and press reports published between August 12 and 13, 2026.

The dialogue began on August 6, seven months after Nicolás Maduro's capture by U.S. forces, in a process directly spearheaded by Washington. The delegations were led by Jorge Rodríguez, president of the National Assembly controlled by the ruling

party, and Dinorah Figuera, president of the Parliament elected in 2015. Both signed a two-page document that, according to international media, addresses neither the political transition nor the holding of elections, even though these are the issues that Venezuelan society and the international community consider priorities.

The announced agreements focus on two areas. The first is providing assistance to those affected by the twin earthquakes of June 24, which left more than 6,300 dead according to figures released by the authorities and the international press. The parties agreed to facilitate the recovery of international reserve assets deposited at the Bank of England—primarily gold bullion valued at approximately \$1.9 billion—through transparency and audit mechanisms, with the aim of allocating these funds to housing, electricity, health care, and debris removal programs.

The second point concerns the transformation of the judicial system. The agreed-upon document establishes four lines of action: reforms to the Organic Law of the Supreme Court of Justice and other regulations; renewal and expansion of the judicial nominations committee; design of a new process for selecting all Supreme Court justices; and creation of a council responsible for reviewing the credentials and qualifications of nominees. The opposition considers this reform indispensable, given that the TSJ endorsed Maduro's reelection in 2024 without presenting evidence, even though the opposition demonstrated its victory through the election records.

The absence of María Corina Machado and Edmundo González Urrutia—the two leaders who embody the electoral legitimacy of 2024—has been interpreted by analysts as a factor that could jeopardize the future of the process. Both announced on July 28 that they would not participate in the roundtable, though they would not block it either. Washington, for its part, expressed “satisfaction” with the start of the dialogue and linked it to the three-phase plan designed by the Trump administration to lead Venezuela toward democratic elections.

Meanwhile, Machado, winner of the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize and the opposition's leading figure, sent a message on Wednesday from the Free America Forum in Montevideo, thanking President Donald Trump and Secretary of State Marco Rubio for initiating the “dismantling of the repressive and criminal system” operating in Venezuela. She highlighted citizen mobilization as the legal basis for Maduro's arrest and asserted that the transition must be led by Venezuelan society, not by political elites. She also conveyed a message of hope to the people of Cuba and Nicaragua, assuring them that democracy will come to both countries.

The first round of negotiations thus leaves an ambiguous picture: technical and humanitarian agreements, but no progress on the central issue of the democratic transition. International pressure and the role of excluded actors—especially

Machado—will be decisive in determining whether this process becomes a genuine path toward institutional reconstruction or whether it is reduced to a partial management of the emergency.

Cuba Faces the Challenge of a Social Rule of Law

BY PLC ON AUGUST 14, 2026, 10:54 A.M. |

[CUBA](#), [ECONOMY](#), [OPINION](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



A state may declare that it protects workers, but if wages continually lose their purchasing power, that protection becomes insufficient. AI-generated photo / ASF

CUBA-SOCIAL LAW

By Antonio Suárez Fonticiella

Havana. PLC. Opinion / To speak of a social rule of law is to speak of much more than laws, courts, or institutions. It means speaking of a state whose very purpose must be linked to the protection of the individual, justice, equality, dignity, and the conditions necessary for every citizen to lead a dignified life.

In the case of Cuba, the Constitution itself establishes that Cuba is a socialist state governed by the rule of law and social justice, and it lists dignity, equity, equality, and individual and collective well-being and prosperity among its founding principles.

The question that inevitably arises, especially in light of the reality of 2026, is:

To what extent are these constitutional principles becoming a concrete reality for Cuban citizens?

The welfare state is demonstrated in everyday life

A state that defines itself as “social” cannot be evaluated solely on the basis of its declarations.

It must be evaluated by what happens in people’s homes.

Social justice should be felt in a worker's wages, in a retiree's pension, in the availability of food, in access to medicine, in the functioning of hospitals, in education, in housing, in transportation, and in basic services.

Because for a family that spends long hours without electricity, social justice is not an academic concept.

Nor is it for someone who cannot afford to buy the necessary food on their income.

For a retiree whose income loses purchasing power in the face of rising prices, the discussion ceases to be ideological and becomes a matter of survival.

And for those who work every day but cannot make their wages stretch far enough to cover their basic needs, a much deeper question arises:

What does social prosperity really mean if individual effort does not allow one to live with dignity?

Written Rights and Exercised Rights

In recent years, Cuba has undertaken a comprehensive legislative process following the 2019 Constitution. The National Assembly has introduced new laws as tools designed to strengthen citizens' rights, due process, and legal certainty. The Administrative Procedure Act, for example, was introduced as a means to strengthen the ability to file complaints against actions by the public administration.

This reflects an important principle:

a right only acquires true force when citizens can effectively exercise and assert it.

It is not enough for a Constitution to merely recognize rights.

It is not enough to pass laws.

It is not enough to create institutions.

The true social rule of law begins when citizens can legally challenge a decision they consider unjust and find an impartial institutional response.

Cuba's own parliamentary leadership has acknowledged that it is not enough to pass laws and that it is essential to ensure their enforcement.

That point is fundamental.

Because there is a huge difference between passing a law and putting it into practice.

Social justice also means being able to seek redress

A social state should not view citizens merely as recipients of services or beneficiaries of public policies.

It must also view them as holders of rights.

This means that a person must be able to file a complaint when they believe an institution has acted improperly.

They must be able to challenge an administrative decision.

They must be able to demand transparency.

They must be able to report abuse.

They must be able to express dissatisfaction.

And they must have institutions capable of listening to them.

The relationship between the state and the citizen should not be based solely on obedience.

It must also be built on the responsibility of those in power toward the citizen.

Cuba is facing a historic test

The current economic reality makes this discussion even more important.

Cuba is facing one of its most severe economic and energy crises in recent decades. Reuters reports that in August 2026, power outages in several provinces exceeded 20 hours a day in some cases and that the crisis is affecting essential sectors of the economy and daily life.

Faced with this reality, the government has pushed forward with new economic reforms.

In June 2026, Prime Minister Manuel Marrero Cruz defended the announced economic reforms and maintained that their essential purpose is to improve the quality of life and move toward a prosperous and sustainable socialism.

This is precisely where the true test lies.

If the stated goal is to improve the quality of life, the results must be measurable in terms of quality of life.

Not just in decrees.

Not just in resolutions.

Not just in speeches.

But at families' dinner tables, in wages, in production, in public services, and in the opportunities available to every citizen.

The welfare state must promote well-being

There is a contradiction that Cuba cannot ignore.

A state can declare that it protects workers, but if wages continually lose their purchasing power, that protection becomes insufficient.

It can guarantee certain social services, but if those services deteriorate due to a lack of resources, they too need to be reviewed.

It can speak of equality, but if economic disparities grow and one segment of the population has access to resources that another cannot obtain, the debate over equity resurfaces.

Social justice does not mean that everyone has exactly the same.

It means that rules and institutions must allow people to live with dignity and ensure that no one is left to fend for themselves when it comes to their basic needs.

Individual prosperity also matters

There is another aspect that deserves special attention.

The Cuban Constitution does not speak only of collective well-being. It also speaks of individual and collective prosperity.

This takes on enormous importance in today's Cuba.

A person who works, produces, starts a business, or creates a venture should not be viewed solely as someone who reaps a personal benefit.

Their activity can also generate jobs, goods, services, taxes, and wealth for society.

Therefore, social justice and individual prosperity do not necessarily have to be conflicting concepts.

A society needs to protect those in vulnerable situations, but it also needs to create conditions that allow those who produce to thrive.

Without sufficient wealth, it becomes increasingly difficult to sustain a true welfare state.

Cuba's Great Challenge

The discussion, therefore, should not be reduced to whether Cuba maintains or abandons socialism.

The deeper question is:

How can the principles of social justice, dignity, well-being, and prosperity enshrined in the Constitution be translated into concrete realities for citizens?

That is the real challenge.

Because a Social Rule of Law cannot be measured solely by what it promises.

It must be measured by what it guarantees.

Not only by the laws it passes, but by its ability to enforce them.

Not only by the services it provides, but by the quality and accessibility of those services.

Not only by declared equality, but by real opportunities.

And not only by social protection, but by the possibility for every citizen to work, produce, prosper, and build their future.

The question that remains on the table

Cuba faces a difficult reality.

The economic, energy, and social crises are forcing a reevaluation of many things.

But any transformation should be based on a fundamental principle:

the citizen must be at the center.

If the state defines itself as a state governed by the rule of law and social justice, then the individual cannot be merely a number in a statistic or simply the recipient of decisions.

They must be the primary subject of those decisions.

Because in the end, the true measure of a social rule-of-law state does not lie in what it says about itself.

It lies in a much simpler question:

Can an ordinary citizen live with dignity, exercise their rights, speak out when those rights are violated, and work and prosper within the established rules?

If the answer is yes, then those principles begin to become a reality.

If the answer is no, then the challenge is not merely to defend the principles.

It lies in making them a reality.

Raúl Castro Reappears at Fidel's Centennial: An Event for the Regime's Elite in a Country in Darkness

BY PLC ON AUGUST 14, 2026, 10:08 A.M. |

[CUBA](#) AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



While speeches, ovations, and slogans filled the Karl Marx Theater, the real Cuba remained in a blackout. Photo captured from Cuban television coverage of the event at the Karl Marx Theater.

CUBA—FIDEL CASTRO'S CENTENARY

Havana. PLC | Raúl Castro, 95, reappeared this Thursday in Havana after months of not appearing in public. He did so at the Karl Marx Theater, which the regime has turned into the central venue for the tributes marking Fidel Castro's centennial. At his side was Delia Soto del Valle, Fidel Castro's widow, whose presence is intended to reinforce the image of family continuity and symbolic unity at a time when the country is undergoing an unprecedented crisis.

The ceremony brought together the country's top leadership: Miguel Díaz-Canel, Manuel Marrero, Esteban Lazo, high-ranking military officials, and the surviving veteran leaders. The carefully choreographed event was presented as a celebration of the "enduring relevance of Fidel's thought," but in reality it served as an internal ritual of reaffirmation for a weakened leadership, disconnected from social reality and increasingly isolated internationally.

While speeches, ovations, and slogans unfolded at the Karl Marx Theater, the real Cuba remained in the dark. Entire neighborhoods in Havana and Santiago had gone more than 24 hours without electricity. Shortages of water, food, and transportation marked the daily lives of millions of Cubans who have neither the time nor the

energy to official celebrations. The gap between the solemnity of the ceremony and the country's precarious state was, once again, abysmal.

The presence of Raúl Castro—frail and visibly aged—sought to convey continuity amid the crisis. But his appearance also underscored the central paradox of the moment: the regime celebrates its founders while the model they built is crumbling.

The Karl Marx Theater, with its monumental architecture and history of party events, once again served as the stage for an elite celebrating itself. Outside, the Cuba that was not invited to the tribute faces power outages, economic collapse, protests, and social deterioration that no ceremony can hide. Raúl Castro's reappearance does not change the country's course; it merely confirms that those in power continue to look to the past while the nation demands a future that never comes.

The expulsion of Cuban diplomats in Santo Domingo reveals a major clash in the Caribbean

BY PLC ON AUGUST 14, 2026, 7:04 A.M. |

[CUBA](#), [THE UNITED STATES](#), AND [LATIN AMERICA](#)



The incident reveals a pattern: Dominican foreign policy, under the administration of Luis Abinader, has distanced itself from Havana and aligned more closely with U.S. positions on hemispheric issues. Photo of the MINREX building in Havana. Photo © PLC.

CUBA-DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Havana. PLC | The reaction of the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the expulsion of ten of its diplomats from the Dominican Republic is not merely a gesture of protest: it is a visible sign of a regional political realignment that has been brewing for years and is now emerging in stark relief. [The MINREX statement](#), released on August 13, accuses the Dominican government of acting under “subjugation” to U.S. policy, characterizing the measure as an act of subordination aimed at isolating Havana.

The conflict erupted when Santo Domingo requested the withdrawal of nine members of the Cuban mission and their family members, invoking Article 9 of the Vienna Convention, which allows a country to declare someone persona non grata without being required to explain its reasons. The Dominican Foreign Ministry insists that the decision complies with international law and that it will not provide further details, emphasizing that the matter will be handled discreetly to preserve bilateral relations.

The Cuban response, however, interprets the measure as part of a hostile escalation that is not new. Havana points out that the Dominican Republic excluded Cuba from

the postponed 10th Summit of the Americas and changed its vote at the UN regarding the resolution against the blockade—moves that Cuba considers to be aligned with Washington. In its statement, MINREX maintains that the diplomats always acted in accordance with the Vienna Convention and with respect for Dominican laws, and therefore rejects any technical or legal justification for the expulsion.

The episode reveals a pattern: Dominican foreign policy, under the administration of Luis Abinader, has distanced itself from Havana and aligned more closely with U.S. positions on hemispheric issues. Although Santo Domingo insists that the expulsion falls within its sovereign authority, the coincidence with previous decisions suggests a strategic shift that Cuba interprets as part of a regional diplomatic encirclement. Havana, for its part, seeks to portray the conflict as being with the Dominican government, not with its people, invoking the historical ties between the two nations.

Beyond the rhetoric, the case exposes a structural tension: the struggle between Cuban diplomacy, which seeks to maintain channels of dialogue in the Caribbean, and U.S. pressure on governments in the region to limit Havana's influence. The expulsion of diplomats is an extreme measure in the diplomatic repertoire and, although legal, is rarely carried out without political consequences. In this case, it opens a new front in the already complex relationship between Cuba and the Dominican Republic and suggests that the Caribbean diplomatic landscape will continue to shift under Washington's shadow.

Dominican Republic Expels Nine Cuban Diplomats, Marking a Historic Shift in Relations with Havana

BY PLC ON AUGUST 13, 2026, 8:59 P.M. |
[CUBA](#), [LATIN AMERICA](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



The expulsion comes amid growing tensions between Santo Domingo and Havana. In May, President Luis Abinader publicly declared that Cuba “is obviously not a democratic state,” an unusual statement in Caribbean diplomacy. Photo of Santo Domingo © Cuban Diplomatic Missions/MINREX

CUBA-DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Santo Domingo. PLC | The Dominican Republic has taken one of the most severe measures any Latin American government has taken against Cuba in recent years: ordering the expulsion of nine members of the Cuban diplomatic mission and their families, who must leave the country within seven days. The measure, confirmed by the Dominican Foreign Ministry in an [unusually brief statement](#), is based on the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and is being carried out without a public explanation—a move that in diplomatic terms is equivalent to declaring someone persona non grata, although Santo Domingo avoided explicitly using that phrase.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs emphasized that it will not provide additional details “as this involves diplomatic communications,” a statement that underscores the exceptional nature of the decision. The Foreign Ministry also did not reveal the names, ranks, or roles of the diplomats affected, nor whether the measure is in response to a specific incident or a broader deterioration in bilateral relations.

According to the newspaper *Listín Diario*, the total number of people required to leave the country is 21, including family members.

The expulsion comes amid growing tensions between Santo Domingo and Havana. In May, President Luis Abinader publicly stated that Cuba “is obviously not a democratic state,” an unusual assertion in Caribbean diplomacy. In July, the Dominican Republic abstained from the UN vote on the U.S. embargo, breaking with decades of automatic support for the resolution against the sanctions. And in 2025, the Dominican government excluded Cuba—along with Nicaragua and Venezuela—from the 10th Summit of the Americas scheduled to take place in Punta Cana.

The Dominican move is also part of a regional trend of breaking ties with Havana. In March, Ecuador declared the entire Cuban mission persona non grata, and Cuba responded by closing its embassy in Quito. Costa Rica downgraded its relations with Cuba to the consular level after closing its mission in Havana. More recently, Colombia’s president-elect, Abelardo de la Espriella, announced that he will sever relations with Cuba and Nicaragua upon taking office, stating that his government “will have no ties whatsoever with tyrannies.”

Santo Domingo’s move, however, carries particular symbolic weight. After decades of estrangement during the dictatorship of Rafael Leónidas Trujillo, bilateral relations were reestablished in 1996 and saw periods of closeness, including Fidel Castro’s official visit in 1998. The expulsion of nine Cuban diplomats marks a break with that era and sends an unequivocal signal that the Dominican government is no longer willing to tolerate conduct it considers incompatible with its foreign policy, even if it has not made such conduct public.

Official discretion does not obscure the significance of the gesture: expelling nearly half of a diplomatic mission is a highly politically charged action, one that is taken only when a state wishes to send a strong message without formally severing relations. In this case, the message seems clear: the Dominican Republic is joining the group of Latin American countries that have decided to distance themselves from the Cuban regime at a time when Havana is facing regional isolation, an internal crisis, and growing international scrutiny.

Cuba: From a Productive Economy to an Economy of Survival

BY PLC ON AUGUST 13, 2026, 8:39 P.M. |

[CUBA](#), [ECONOMY](#), AND [OPINION](#)



Why can't a country with arable land, agricultural expertise, skilled workers, and a long tradition of productivity produce enough food for its own population? Photo © IA/Antonio Suárez Fonticiella

CUBA-ECONOMY

By Antonio Suárez Fonticiella

Havana. PLC Opinion | Discussing today's Cuba requires looking far beyond the crisis of recent years. Food shortages, power outages, inflation, low wages, and dependence on imports did not appear overnight. They are the result of decades of economic decisions, structural changes, and a model that, over time, gradually lost its ability to generate wealth.

The 1959 Revolution inherited a country with enormous inequalities. Republican Cuba was no paradise: there was poverty, especially in rural areas, significant social disparities, and an economy overly concentrated in sugar. But it was not a country without development either. In 1958, Cuba ranked among the Latin American economies with the highest income levels and possessed significant agricultural, industrial, and service infrastructure.

The great change began when the new government radically transformed the relationship between the state, property, and production.

From Landowning Peasants to State-Controlled Producers

The Agrarian Reform of 1959 was one of the first major steps. The state began to intervene directly in land ownership and the organization of production. Subsequently, collectivization and the creation of farms and cooperatives were expanded.

The stated intention was to end land concentration and modernize the countryside. But the long-term result posed another problem: farmers ceased to make many of the economic decisions that had previously depended directly on them.

When producers cannot freely decide what to produce, how much to produce, to whom to sell, and what profit they will earn, a fundamental problem arises: economic incentive.

An economy may have fertile land, skilled workers, and natural resources; but if the incentives to produce disappear, productivity ultimately suffers.

Sugar kept afloat a model that failed to solve the underlying problem

For decades, Cuba continued to rely heavily on sugar. Between 1959 and 1989, sugar accounted for between 73% and 90% of export revenue from goods, according to a study on the Cuban agricultural sector.

This made it possible to finance imports and keep an economy afloat that needed to purchase abroad a large portion of the products and inputs it could not produce in sufficient quantities domestically.

The problem was that an economy was being created with an inherent contradiction: the goal was to achieve economic sovereignty, yet an essential part of its functioning depended on preferential trade relations with a foreign partner.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, that structure was laid bare.

Cuba then entered the so-called Special Period and suffered an estimated decline in GDP of between 11% and 13%.

But that crisis should have served as a wake-up call to fundamentally change the production model.

It did not.

And so we arrive at today's Cuba

What is truly concerning is that 36 years after the start of the Special Period, many of those problems persist, and some have worsened.

Agricultural production fails to meet the population's needs. The sugar industry, which for decades was one of the pillars of the economy, has practically collapsed: Reuters reported that by 2025, production was expected to be just 300,000 metric tons of sugar, compared to the millions of metric tons that Cuba historically produced.

Agriculture needs fuel, fertilizers, machinery, spare parts, and financing. When these elements are lacking, farmers produce less. And when the country produces less, it has to import more.

That's where the vicious cycle sets in:

less production → more imports → less foreign currency → less capacity to import inputs → even less production.

A 2025 study by the French Development Agency described the Cuban model as unproductive and poorly diversified, and concluded that it was no longer sustainable.

And what does all this mean for the average Cuban?

It means something far more painful than a GDP figure.

It means that a person can work all month long and still not be able to adequately feed their family.

It means that wages are losing value relative to prices.

It means that products that should be coming from Cuban farms end up being imported from abroad.

It means that a mother can spend hours searching for food while there's no electricity at home to keep it fresh.

And it means that citizens end up relying more and more on relatives who have emigrated, on the informal market, or on anyone who has access to foreign currency.

In August 2026, the energy crisis has taken economic problems to a whole new level: prolonged power outages, water supply issues, shortages of basic goods, and the deterioration of essential services are part of daily life for millions of Cubans.

This can no longer be explained merely as a temporary hardship.

It is a structural crisis.

The problem is not just how much Cuba matters

The most important question should be:

Why can't a country with arable land, agricultural expertise, skilled workers, and a long tradition of production produce enough food for its own population?

That is the question that should be at the center of the national debate.

Because importing is not bad in and of itself. All countries import.

The problem arises when a country needs to import goods that it could produce competitively within its own borders, but lacks sufficient foreign currency to do so.

And so the population ends up paying the price.

The Paradox of Current Reforms

Today, the Cuban government is once again talking about business autonomy, private investment, greater market participation, and new measures to try to revive the economy. The package of 176 measures announced recently does, in fact, acknowledge the need to introduce significant economic changes.

But this raises another uncomfortable question:

Can production recover if a system is maintained in which the state retains fundamental control over the economy while simultaneously attempting to use market mechanisms to address its shortcomings?

The market cannot function only when it is convenient.

If producers are asked to produce more, they also need security regarding their property, access to inputs, freedom to negotiate, the possibility of making a profit, and stable rules.

Otherwise, we return to the same contradiction.

My Opinion

In my view, Cuba's greatest economic failure does not simply consist of the fact that there are shortages today.

The failure lies in the fact that a country that once had a significant productive base ended up destroying or weakening a large part of the mechanisms that allowed it to generate wealth and then had to build emergency mechanisms to try to recover what it had lost.

For decades, people were promised that present sacrifice would lead to a prosperous society in the future.

But for one generation after another, that future never seems to arrive.

Today, Cubans aren't just asking when development will arrive.

They are asking how to get food, water, electricity, medicine, and a wage that is enough to live on.

And that difference is enormous.

Because when a society shifts from discussing how to distribute wealth to discussing how to obtain the bare necessities for survival, we are facing something deeper than an economic crisis.

We are facing the collapse of a model.

Cuba needs to start producing again. It needs to revive agriculture, industry, investment, entrepreneurship, and the capacity to generate wealth. But above all, it needs workers to have a real incentive to produce and for economic rules to be stable enough so that production once again becomes an opportunity rather than a sacrifice.

The question facing Cuba in 2026 should not be merely what new measure the government will approve.

The truly decisive question is:

When will it once again be profitable to produce in Cuba?

Because as long as production isn't profitable, the country will continue to import.

And as long as it has to import what it used to be able to produce, "Cuban citizens will continue to foot the bill for the crisis."

The international press agrees: the centennial of Fidel Castro's birth comes as the Revolution faces its worst crisis, amid power outages and social unrest

BY PLC ON AUGUST 13, 2026, 2:01 P.M. |
[CUBA](#), [INTERNATIONAL](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



International media have begun to portray the anniversary as a painful contrast between propaganda and reality. Photo © PLC

CUBA-INTERNATIONAL PRESS

Havana. PLC | The commemoration of Fidel Castro's centennial has coincided with a moment that the international press describes as the most critical for the Revolution in decades. While the government organizes tributes, symposiums, exhibitions, and speeches to extol the figure of the historic leader, the country is experiencing massive power outages, severe shortages, and social deterioration that can no longer be concealed, not even in pro-government digital spaces. The gap between the government's narrative and the daily experience of Cubans is now more visible than ever.

International media have begun to portray the anniversary as a painful contrast between propaganda and reality. **TN (Argentina)** states that Cuba is experiencing "its worst moment under Trump's oppressive pressure," noting that the regime is attempting to use Fidel's legacy to contain social unrest caused by power outages and shortages. **Euronews** describes the situation as "an unprecedented energy collapse," noting that the country has suffered several nationwide blackouts in a matter of days. **Al Jazeera** notes that the electricity crisis and fuel shortages have

led Cuba into “a phase of structural deterioration,” while **El País (Spain)** reports on accounts from Cubans who spend “24 hours without power” and complain that daily life has become unsustainable.

The regime’s strategy is clear: to reinforce its founding myth at a time when the system’s legitimacy is rapidly eroding. But the context is adverse. Prolonged blackouts—which in some neighborhoods last more than 24 or 30 hours—have sparked nighttime protests, pot-banging demonstrations, and public outcries that are multiplying in Havana, Santiago, and other provinces. Food and water shortages, the collapse of public transportation, and precarious healthcare conditions are fueling a climate of frustration that no anniversary can dispel.

The international press highlights the contrast between the official celebration and the reality of the country. **BBC Mundo** notes that Fidel’s centennial is taking place in a Cuba “marked by despair and mass migration.” **The Guardian** notes that the regime is trying to project stability but faces “an unprecedented crisis of governance.” **France 24** reports that the younger generation, less emotionally attached to the revolutionary myth, is the one protesting the most and the least tolerant of official rhetoric. Even **Reuters** has reported that the energy crisis and shortages have left the government “at its most vulnerable moment in decades.”

Granma publishes eulogies dedicated to Fidel without allowing visible comments, in an attempt to shield the narrative. But on Cubadebate, where control is less airtight, isolated criticisms from readers appear, denouncing power outages lasting more than ten days, entire neighborhoods in darkness, and a widespread sense of neglect. The epic narrative coexists with testimonies describing an exhausted Cuba, where daily life has become unsustainable.

The centennial thus becomes an uncomfortable mirror. The figure of Fidel, used as a symbol of resistance, contrasts with a country facing its worst energy crisis in decades, with repeated nationwide blackouts and infrastructure on the brink of collapse. Food and water shortages are affecting all sectors, and the young population—the least emotionally attached to the revolutionary myth—is the one protesting the most and the least tolerant of official rhetoric.

The international press agrees that the regime is attempting to turn the anniversary into an act of ideological cohesion, but the social and economic context prevents the message from taking hold. The centennial celebration is taking place in a Cuba where libraries are closing due to a lack of books, where bookstores sell pamphlets instead of literature, where culture is reduced to propaganda, and where daily life unfolds in literal and political darkness.

Fidel Castro's anniversary has failed to revitalize the revolutionary narrative. On the contrary, it has laid bare the fragility of the system he built. The Revolution celebrates its founder, but the country he left behind is facing its worst moment in decades. And that contradiction, increasingly visible, sets the tone for a centennial that arrives not as a tribute, but as a diagnosis. Rather than projecting strength, the anniversary exposes the exhaustion of a model that can no longer sustain even its own narrative. Cuba enters Fidel's centennial not as a nation celebrating its history, but as a country grappling, in the darkness, with the consequences of that history.

Mexico distances itself from Raúl Guillermo Rodríguez Castro, known as “El Cangrejo,” as the shadow of the “Quintana Roo Cuban Mafia” looms larger

BY PLC ON AUGUST 13, 2026, 9:28 A.M. |
[CUBA](#), [MEXICO](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



For Mexico, the challenge is twofold: to maintain security cooperation with the United States without sparking a diplomatic conflict with Cuba, a country with which it has historically sought stable relations. Photo: social media.

MEXICO-CUBAN MAFIA

Mexico City. PLC | The Mexican government’s response to [The New York Times](#) report on the “Cuban Mafia of Quintana Roo” adds a new dimension to a case that has already become a source of diplomatic tension between Havana, Washington, and Mexico City. In a fact sheet released by the Security Cabinet, Mexican authorities stated that they have no “information or evidence of their own” linking Raúl Guillermo Rodríguez Castro, alias El Cangrejo—Raúl Castro’s grandson and a colonel in the Cuban Ministry of the Interior—to criminal networks involved in human trafficking in the Mexican Caribbean.

The statement is significant. It comes after the U.S. newspaper reported that Rodríguez Castro had allegedly received luxury gifts and logistical favors from a criminal organization involved in migrant smuggling, according to court testimony by José Miguel González Vidal, one of the network’s members convicted in the United States. The report describes a network that operated using stolen credit cards, goods shipped to Cuba, and alleged agreements with Cuban officials to

facilitate passage through customs. The mention of Raúl Castro's grandson—a key figure in the former president's personal security and a political operator in contacts with Washington—elevated the case to a level of international sensitivity.

Mexico, however, has opted for a cautious stance. The Security Cabinet stresses that it has no evidence of links between criminal organizations and “foreign officials or their relatives,” and reaffirms its commitment to international cooperation against organized crime. The response appears designed to avoid friction with Havana while, at the same time, not openly contradicting Washington, which since 2023 has been conducting joint investigations with Mexico as part of Operation Sisyphus, focused on human trafficking networks operating in the Caribbean and the Yucatán Peninsula.

The contrast between Mexico's stance and the *New York Times*' revelations leaves an ambiguous gap that raises questions. Havana has dismissed the accusations as “slander,” while Rodríguez Castro has not responded to requests for comment. But the fact that the report is based on U.S. court documents and testimony from convicted members of the criminal network lends weight to the journalistic investigation. The lack of evidence in Mexico does not necessarily imply the absence of links, but rather reveals the limits of local capabilities to track transnational operations that span Cuba, Mexico, and the United States.

The case also exposes the fragility of the Cuban regime at a time of internal crisis. In recent months, Rodríguez Castro has been portrayed as a reliable liaison in dealings with the Trump administration. His appearance in a criminal case—albeit without formal charges—erodes that image and adds pressure to a government facing massive power outages, severe shortages, and nightly protests. The official narrative surrounding the centennial of Fidel Castro—with symposiums, tributes, and ideological pomp—contrasts with the reality of a country where the political elite appears increasingly exposed to international scandals.

For Mexico, the challenge is twofold: to maintain security cooperation with the United States without sparking a diplomatic conflict with Cuba, a country with which it has historically sought stable relations. For Cuba, the risk is greater: that a member of the Castro family will be linked to criminal networks at a time when the regime's legitimacy is at its lowest point in decades.

The “Cuban Mafia of Quintana Roo” is no longer just a legal case. It is an uncomfortable mirror reflecting regional tensions, institutional vulnerabilities, and the growing international exposure of a Cuban elite that for years operated with discretion. Mexico's response—prudent and limited—does not close the chapter. It merely confirms that the story is far from over.

The regime puts Anna Bensi on trial: a minor case turned into a major weapon of intimidation

BY PLC ON AUGUST 13, 2026, 7:53 A.M. |

[CUBA](#) AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



Cubalex has stated it unequivocally: the officer's arguments lack legal basis and are being used to ensure impunity for state agents. The right to record police actions is an essential tool for the defense of citizens, and criminalizing it is a form of censorship. Photo captured from Facebook

CUBA-REPRESSION

Havana. PLC | The announcement that influencer and activist Anna Sofía Benítez Silvente—known as Anna Bensi—and her mother will stand trial confirms a pattern that is now impossible to ignore: the Cuban regime is using the criminal justice system as a tool of political punishment against young voices who have managed to break through the information blockade. The case, which was closed in April and reopened in July, is an example of how an everyday situation—recording a police officer delivering a summons—can be turned into a legal proceeding designed to intimidate, wear down, and send a message to the rest of the public.

The charge is as weak as it is revealing. The officer who went to Anna and her mother's apartment on March 10 claims to have felt “offended” and “threatened” because his image was recorded and shared on social media. He alleges that his “right to privacy” was violated. But both Cuban law and international human rights standards are clear: public officials, in the exercise of their duties, do not enjoy the same expectation of privacy as an ordinary, un d citizen. Recording a police officer while performing an official act is not a crime; it is a legitimate form of protection

and documentation, especially in a country where State Security operates without transparency and with widespread impunity.

Cubalex has stated this unequivocally: the officer's arguments lack legal basis and are used to ensure impunity for state agents. The right to record police actions is an essential tool for the defense of citizens, and criminalizing it is a form of censorship.

The turn of events in this case reveals its political motivation. In April, the case was dismissed. But in July, after Anna Bensi publicly clashed with Gerardo Hernández—a former spy for the regime and current national coordinator of the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution—the case was reopened. The sequence is too precise to be coincidental: first the public criticism, then the reopening of the case, and now the trial. The message is clear: anyone who challenges figures in the political apparatus will be punished.

The initial measure of house arrest imposed on Anna and her mother had already been excessive. Now, putting them on trial for a crime against personal and family privacy is an escalation that seeks two objectives: to silence an influencer with growing influence and to warn other young people that state surveillance will not tolerate acts of civic autonomy.

The context amplifies the gravity of the case. Cuba is in the midst of a deep crisis, with endless power outages, food and water shortages, deteriorating public health conditions, and nightly protests in numerous municipalities. Instead of addressing the basic needs of the population, the regime is devoting resources to persecuting a young woman who filmed a police officer to protect herself. Repression is becoming more selective, more symbolic, and more targeted at those who have the ability to influence public opinion on social media—a space the state does not control in the same way it controls the official press.

The trial of Anna Bensi and her mother is not an isolated case: it is part of an intimidation strategy aimed at stifling the emergence of new critical voices. It is also a symptom of the regime's fragility, which responds with disproportionate force to even the smallest gestures because it knows that the legitimacy it inherited from the historic generation has been eroded. In a country where recording a police officer can become a crime, the law ceases to be a guarantee and becomes a weapon.

The legal proceedings now underway will be closely watched by human rights organizations and the Cuban diaspora. But beyond the verdict, the case has already revealed what matters most: the regime does not fear major opponents, but rather the small acts of freedom that can multiply. And that is why it is persecuting Anna Bensi. Because in a country where darkness is both political and literal, turning on a camera is an act of resistance

Fidel Turns 100, and Cuba Faces the Ruins of His Legacy

BY PLC ON AUGUST 13, 2026, 7:38 A.M. |
[LATEST NEWS](#)

CUBA-FIDEL CASTRO

<https://youtu.be/33uCPGi5tJI?si=uKX8mWnPD67yDvr1>

Havana. PLC Analysis | The centennial of Fidel Castro's birth comes at a time that lays bare, with a harshness impossible to gloss over, the true outcome of his political project. While the regime organizes symposiums, concerts, exhibitions, and ceremonies to extol the revolutionary leader, the real Cuba—the one that exists outside the Convention Center—is sinking into endless blackouts, food and water shortages, deteriorating public health, and nightly protests that are multiplying in neighborhoods and municipalities. The gap between the official celebration and everyday life is now an abyss.

The Communist Party has spent the week glorifying Fidel's memory, portraying him as a strategist, humanist, and architect of national sovereignty. But Cubans, facing an unprecedented crisis, are wondering what remains of the promises of the revolution he led for nearly half a century. For many, the answer is painful: what remains is a country devastated by erratic decisions, ideological improvisations, and a system of control that has stifled any possibility of development for decades.

Fidel Castro's economic legacy is inseparable from the current collapse. Under his leadership, the sugar industry—the country's most important sector for a century—was dismantled. Sugar mills were destroyed, fields were abandoned, infrastructure was dismantled, and a productive economy was replaced by top-down experiments that never worked. The famous "F1 cows," designed to produce milk in tropical conditions, became a symbol of a leadership obsessed with proving that political will could replace science and technology. They did not produce milk, but they did leave a trail of wasted resources and a livestock sector in ruins.

Added to this is the architecture of terror that Fidel built from the very beginning: an omnipresent surveillance apparatus, a judicial system subordinate to political power, and a neighborhood control network that turned private life into a monitored space. That model, perfected over decades, is what today sustains the ruling " " elite while

the population faces hunger, blackouts, and repression. The current crisis is no accident: it is the direct consequence of a system designed to control, not to produce.

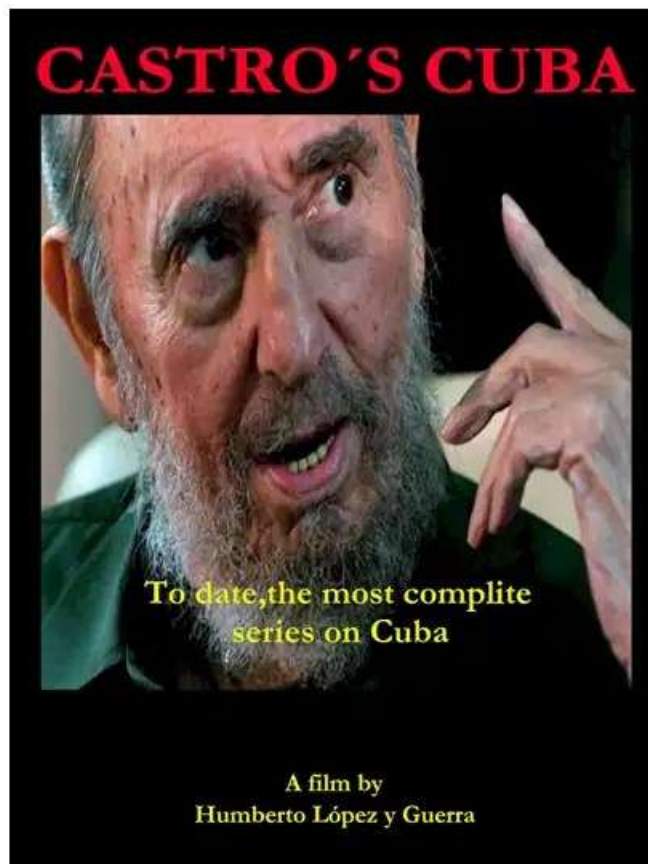
The contrast between the official celebrations and the reality of the country is stark. While foreign delegations arrive in Havana to participate in the International Colloquium “Fidel: Legacy and Future,” Cubans stand in endless lines to get water, food, or fuel. While documentaries about the leader’s life are screened, hospitals lack medicine and a stable electricity supply. While speeches are delivered about heroic resistance, thousands of citizens protest in the dead of night, banging on pots and pans to demand the bare necessities: light, food, and dignity.

Propaganda insists that the crisis is the result of pressure from Washington, the embargo, and energy sanctions. But even those who defend Fidel acknowledge that the country he left behind was already in a state of profound decline. The electrical infrastructure is collapsing because it was never modernized. Agriculture fails to produce because it was dismantled. Industry is paralyzed because it became an appendage of the state. The structural poverty that defines life in Cuba today is a direct legacy of a model that sacrificed efficiency in the name of ideology.

Fidel Castro’s centennial invites us not only to remember him but also to honestly assess the country he built. The revolution promised prosperity, equality, and sovereignty; what it left behind was a system incapable of sustaining the daily lives of its people. The elite celebrates, but the people suffer. Official rhetoric glorifies the past, but reality demands answers for a present that is falling apart.

Cuba reaches the centennial of Fidel’s birth in the midst of its worst crisis in thirty years. And that crisis, far from being an anomaly, is the logical consequence of a project that confused control with governance, epic grandeur with development, and resistance with progress. The revolution celebrates its founder, but the country he shaped is fading away a little more each day.

[Castro’s Cuba](#)



Prensa Libre Cuba-TV presents the most comprehensive documentary series ever produced on Cuba's contemporary history. Premiered in 1989 in the United States, Latin America, and Australia, it offers a rigorous examination of the facts that the Castro regime has distorted or concealed from younger generations. With three episodes, *Castro's Cuba* remains the most comprehensive television series dedicated to the island's political, social, and military evolution.

U.S. Fuel and the Shadow of the State: How the Cuban Regime Uses the Private Sector to Navigate Its Own Energy Crisis

BY PLC ON AUGUST 12, 2026, 1:42 P.M. |

[CUBA](#), [ECONOMY](#), [UNITED STATES](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



Private fuel imports from the United States thus become an alternative channel that the regime can discreetly exploit. Photo: Facebook

CUBA-UNITED STATES/HYDROCARBONS

Havana. PLC | Fuel imports from the United States by the Cuban private sector—valued at nearly \$24 million in May alone—have been presented as a lifeline for small businesses struggling to survive amid prolonged blackouts and an unprecedented energy crisis. However, behind this narrative lies a more complex reality: in Cuba, the line between the private and state sectors is porous, and in strategic sectors such as energy, that line practically does not exist. The question many analysts are asking is whether part of these imports is not, in reality, intended to sustain the machinery of the state, including its repressive apparatus and the military elite that controls the country's resources.

Cuba's private sector has grown in recent years, but it has done so within a legal framework designed to ensure that the state maintains control over the most sensitive economic activities. In Cuba, there is no free energy market, nor is there an independent infrastructure for fuel distribution. Everything that enters the country—including what micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) import—passes through state-run ports, warehouses, and operators. This means that the government has the ability to monitor, redirect, or impose conditions on the use of any shipment, especially in times of crisis.

Added to this is a widely documented phenomenon: the existence of private companies linked to relatives of high-ranking officials, former Communist Party cadres, or individuals with direct connections to GAESA, the military conglomerate that controls a large part of the national economy. These companies operate with logistical advantages and permits that are not available to other entrepreneurs. In sectors such as transportation, food imports, construction, and energy, several of these entities function as informal extensions of the state, allowing the government to access resources without having to do so through official channels.

In the current context, where Cuba needs around 100,000 barrels of crude oil per day and produces only slightly more than 40,000, the temptation to use these structures to guarantee fuel for the ruling class is evident. The repressive apparatus—State Security, special forces, and riot police—requires constant mobility, electric generators, and guaranteed access to diesel. In a country where hospitals, schools, and homes suffer power outages lasting more than ten hours, these institutions continue to operate without interruption. This continuity cannot be explained solely by state reserves, which are now severely affected by the U.S. oil embargo and the decline in shipments from Venezuela.

Private fuel imports from the United States thus become an alternative channel that the regime can exploit discreetly. The state does not need to appear as the buyer: it is enough for affiliated companies to import shipments that are then redistributed internally through opaque mechanisms. In Cuba, where transparency is nonexistent and independent oversight is prohibited, this type of practice is not only possible but also consistent with the system's logic of survival.

This does not mean that all MSMEs that import fuel are fronts for the state. Many are legitimate businesses that rely on generators to maintain basic operations. But in a country where political power controls every link in the logistics chain, it is naive to think that the regime does not exploit this avenue to guarantee its own supply. The coexistence of massive blackouts with the continued operation of repressive institutions is a clear indication that the state has found ways to access fuel even when its official channels are blocked.

The flow of fuel from the United States to the Cuban private sector ultimately reveals a profound transformation in the island's political economy. While the government denounces the blockade and the crisis, it uses private structures to circumvent its own limitations. The paradox is that the fuel arriving from U.S. ports may be contributing, directly or indirectly, to sustaining the apparatus that maintains political control over the population. In a country where energy has become an instrument of power, the line between economic survival and the survival of the regime is increasingly difficult to distinguish.

Rubio Sets the Timeline: Cuba Will Have to Wait for a “Very Different Future” Until the End of Trump’s Term

BY PLC ON AUGUST 12, 2026, 11:20 A.M. |

[CUBA](#), [ECONOMY](#), [UNITED STATES](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, in an interview with his wife, Jeanette, on Katie Miller’s podcast, published on Tuesday, August 11. Photo captured from YouTube.

CUBA-UNITED STATES

Miami. PLC | Marco Rubio’s interview for [The Katie Miller Podcast](#) was recorded on August 11, 2026, at the State Department in Washington, D.C. One day later, today, August 12, [Europa Press](#) published the article, which has been widely circulated in international media.

That twenty-four-hour gap is significant, because it allows us to clearly see the Secretary of State’s tone and political calculation. Rubio did not speak of an “upcoming” change, nor of an “imminent” shift, nor of a “transition underway.” He spoke of a timeframe. A term. The end of a term. And in foreign policy, when a high-ranking official sets a timeframe, he is sending a message to both his allies and his adversaries: the change will not happen now, but when it suits Washington.

Rubio said he was “convinced” that Cuba will be on an “irreversible path toward a very different future” before the Trump administration ends. He did not say that Cuba is already on that path. He did not say that signs of it are already visible. He did not say that the process has begun. He said it will happen before the term ends. In other words: not now, but later. And that “later” could mean years.

For Cubans, that phrase carries a concrete weight: waiting. Waiting while the energy embargo tightens, while financial flows are restricted, while sanctions are expanded, while the domestic economy collapses, and the regime tightens its grip. Waiting while Washington applies cumulative pressure and Havana responds with bureaucratic resistance and selective repression. Waiting while daily life becomes more difficult and the political horizon remains unchanged.

Rubio spoke of “transition,” but also of deep-rooted problems that cannot be uprooted “overnight.” He cited Eastern Europe as an example of processes that took between three and five years to take hold. It is a revealing comparison: even in scenarios where political change was abrupt, institutional reconstruction took time, resources, and stability. None of that exists in Cuba today. And yet, Washington insists that sustained pressure is the way forward.

The Trump administration has made Cuba a strategic priority, tightening sanctions and escalating rhetoric to levels that include the threat of military intervention. This crackdown is not a temporary measure: it is part of a strategy of encirclement aimed at suffocating the regime and forcing internal restructuring. But that strategy comes at a human cost that is absent from the rhetoric. Every day of waiting is one more day of blackouts, shortages, inflation, mass migration, and social decline.

Rubio asserts that a Cuba that is “secure, stable, and aligned with the United States” is in Washington’s national interest. What he fails to mention is that this national interest is built on the patience—or desperation—of eleven million people who have no room to maneuver. The transition he envisions is not a shared process: it is a geopolitical blueprint executed from the outside that demands time, resilience, and sacrifice within the island.

The question is inevitable: How much longer must Cubans wait? If the horizon is the end of Trump’s term, the answer is not encouraging. It means years of an energy embargo, years of sanctions, years of deterioration, years of uncertainty. Years in which daily life will continue to be a battleground of silent resistance while international politics plays out its game.

Rubio has set the clock. And in doing so, he has made it clear that the promise of a “very different future” is not an announcement: it is a deferred expectation. A postponed transition. A change that, according to Washington, will come... but not now. And in the meantime, Cubans will have to keep waiting on the same island, under the same conditions, bearing the same burdens, while the geopolitical chessboard decides their fate.

Raúl Castro's Grandson at the Center of a Scandal Involving the Cuban Mafia in Mexico

BY PLC ON AUGUST 12, 2026, 9:52 A.M. |

[CUBA](#), [ECONOMY](#), [MEXICO](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



The case exposes a sensitive vulnerability for the regime. In recent months, Rodríguez Castro has been portrayed as an effective operator, capable of navigating the corridors of power in Havana and engaging with U.S. counterparts. Photo © PLC/IA

[Enlarge cover photo](#)

CUBA-MEXICO

New York. PLC | Raúl Guillermo Rodríguez Castro, known as “El Cangrejo,” finds himself once again at the center of a political and legal storm that spans borders. This time, not because of his role as a key intermediary between Havana and Washington, but because of his alleged connection to the Cuban Mafia based in Quintana Roo, revealed in a [New York Times](#) report that has set off alarm bells in both countries.

The allegation comes from José Miguel González Vidal, a member of the criminal organization who was sentenced in 2023 to 25 years in prison in the United States. In statements included in court documents, González Vidal claimed to have given Rodríguez Castro a boat, a Rolex watch, a Suzuki motorcycle, and luxury clothing from Louis Vuitton. According to his testimony, these gifts were intended to ensure

that goods purchased in Mexico using stolen credit cards could pass through Cuban customs; these goods were part of a network that operated with remarkable impunity in the Mexican Caribbean.

The New York newspaper's report emphasizes that, despite the allegations, El Cangrejo has not been charged by U.S. authorities. His name is mentioned in connection with the scheme, but he is not among the six members of the network who pleaded guilty. The absence of formal charges has not, however, prevented the revelation from causing concern: Rodríguez Castro is a colonel in the Ministry of the Interior, head of his grandfather's personal security detail, and, in recent months, the key figure in exploratory contacts between Cuba and the Trump administration.

Havana reacted quickly. The Cuban government dismissed the allegations as "slander" and denied any link between Rodríguez Castro and criminal activities. "El Cangrejo," for his part, did not respond to requests for comment sent by *The New York Times*. The official strategy appears to be aimed at containing the damage before the narrative takes hold abroad, especially at a time when Cuba is attempting to reestablish channels of dialogue with Washington amid an unprecedented internal crisis.

The case exposes a sensitive vulnerability for the regime. In recent months, Rodríguez Castro has been portrayed as an effective operator, capable of navigating the corridors of power in Havana and engaging with U.S. counterparts. His carefully orchestrated public debut was intended to project an image of competence and control amid an energy crisis, mounting sanctions, and institutional decline. The association—though not yet proven in court—with an international criminal network erodes that narrative and fuels suspicions about the Cuban state apparatus's susceptibility to illicit interests.

For Washington, this information adds complexity to an already tense situation. The Trump administration has maintained indirect contacts with Rodríguez Castro, aware of his domestic influence and his access to the inner circle of power. The appearance of his name in an organized crime case in Mexico does not necessarily imply a change in U.S. strategy, but it does introduce an element of uncertainty regarding the reliability and vulnerability of the interlocutor that Havana has brought to the table.

The episode also sheds light on the expansion of the Cuban Mafia in the Mexican Caribbean, a network that has operated with remarkable sophistication and has managed to infiltrate commercial and financial structures in the region. The mention of a member of the Castro family—even if not accompanied by charges—amplifies the political dimension of the case and forces Cuba to manage reputational damage that goes beyond the judicial realm.

The Cuban regime now faces a dual challenge: preserving Rodríguez Castro's standing as a key figure in its diplomatic strategy while simultaneously containing the impact of allegations that—though denied—are already circulating in international media and U.S. court records. At a time of extreme internal fragility, any shadow cast over the inner circle of power takes on a significance that Havana cannot afford to ignore.

Zelensky Warns of a Global Escalation Following the Use of North Korean Missiles in Russian Attacks Against Ukraine

BY PLC ON AUGUST 11, 2026, 8:28 P.M. |

[RUSSIA](#) AND [UKRAINE](#)



Zelensky stated that the city was attacked with North Korean ballistic missiles, Zircon missiles, and guided aerial bombs—an arsenal that, according to the president, aims to cause maximum damage to civilian infrastructure and exploit the shortage of Patriot interceptors in Ukraine. Photo: social media.

RUSSIA-NORTH KOREA/UKRAINE

Stockholm. PLC | Nighttime attacks between Russia and Ukraine have once again rocked several regions of the country, but this time with an element that heightens international concern: President Volodymyr Zelenskyy accused Moscow of using ballistic missiles supplied by North Korea in the bombardment of the city of Zaporizhzhia, where at least six people were killed and dozens were injured. The allegation, backed by footage and reports from Ukrainian emergency services, adds a more complex geopolitical dimension to the war and reinforces Kyiv's warning about the growing military alliance between Vladimir Putin and Kim Jong Un.

Zelenskyy stated that the city was attacked with North Korean ballistic missiles, Zircon missiles, and guided aerial bombs—an arsenal that, according to the president, is intended to cause maximum damage to civilian infrastructure and exploit the shortage of Patriot interceptors in Ukraine. The president maintained that Russia “for the first time cannot wage war without reinforcements from North Korea,” noting that Moscow has reportedly already received new shipments of ballistic missiles and is preparing to deploy an additional contingent of North Korean soldiers on its territory. Although he did not specify the source of these figures, Zelenskyy has insisted that military collaboration between the two countries has intensified since the signing of the mutual defense pact between Putin and Kim in 2024.

The attack on Zaporizhzhia was the deadliest of the night. According to local authorities, the missiles struck employees of the Zaporizhstal steel plant as they were heading to shelters after the air raid alert was sounded. The explosions caused fires in buildings and vehicles, while emergency crews worked amid the rubble. In other regions, such as Dnipropetrovsk and Donetsk, fatalities were also reported, and in Kyiv, a children's hospital sustained damage after being struck by a ballistic missile.

North Korea's involvement in the war worries Kyiv not only because of the military reinforcement it provides to Russia, but also because it offers Pyongyang the opportunity to refine its weapons systems in a real combat scenario. Zelenskyy warned that this cooperation poses a threat to global security, especially for Asian countries already living under pressure from North Korea's nuclear program.

While Ukraine is asking its Western allies for more air defense capabilities, Russia maintains that its attacks are directed exclusively against military installations and logistics centers. However, the damage to hospitals, factories, and residential areas contradicts that narrative and fuels concerns that the war is entering an even more unpredictable phase, marked by the involvement of external actors and the use of increasingly sophisticated weaponry.

The Regime Digs In as Cuba Sinks: The Political Offensive Amid National Collapse

BY PLC ON AUGUST 11, 2026, 9:55 A.M. |

[CUBA](#) AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



The regime is attempting to turn precarious conditions into a political weapon, reinforcing the idea that the country's survival depends on discipline, unity, and loyalty to the Party. Photo © PLC/IA

CUBA—POLITICAL OFFENSIVE

Havana. PLC Analysis | Cuba is undergoing one of the deepest crises in its recent history, but the regime's response has not been to open channels for dialogue or acknowledge the country's structural deterioration. On the contrary: in recent weeks, the government has intensified its strategy of political entrenchment, ramping up propaganda, organizing international events, and denouncing the United States as solely responsible for the disaster. This rhetorical offensive is occurring in parallel with a material collapse that is affecting every aspect of daily life.

The island is experiencing power outages lasting 20 to 30 hours, nationwide failures of the electrical grid, food shortages, deteriorating public health conditions, and nightly protests in numerous municipalities. The population faces a precarious situation that can no longer be hidden: hospitals without a stable power supply, entire neighborhoods without water, paralyzed transportation, and a social climate marked by frustration and exhaustion. However, as the crisis deepens, the regime is pursuing a political agenda aimed at projecting ideological strength and historical continuity.

In Havana, the government is organizing international symposia, meetings of communist parties, and celebrations marking the centennial of Fidel Castro. These carefully staged events seek to convey the image of a country that remains a beacon of global socialism, capable of attracting foreign delegations and sustaining a narrative of heroic resistance. The presence of figures such as Liu Haixing, an envoy from the Communist Party of China, reinforces this staging. But the solemnity visible on the visitors' faces reveals another interpretation: Cuba is no longer a stable ally, but a source of concern.

The official narrative insists that the energy crisis is the result of "economic genocide" and an "energy blockade" imposed by the United States. Díaz-Canel and other leaders repeat that the island is facing a "hybrid war" and that the only possible response is to "take to the streets," "defend the revolution," and "close ranks." This rhetoric seeks to mobilize the rank and file, justify repression, and prevent spontaneous protests from turning into a coordinated political movement. But it also reveals the regime's fear of losing control of the public sphere, which is now dominated by public discontent.

The strategy of entrenchment has a clear objective: to transform the crisis into a scenario of ideological resistance, where every power outage, every protest, and every international condemnation is interpreted as part of an imperial offensive. The regime is attempting to turn precariousness into a political weapon, reinforcing the idea that the country's survival depends on discipline, unity, and loyalty to the Party. Meanwhile, the elite maintains its privileges, access to resources, and personal stability, oblivious to the deterioration affecting the majority.

The contrast between official pomp and everyday reality is increasingly evident. Cuba holds conferences on Fidel's legacy while the population lives in darkness; it welcomes foreign delegations while hospitals lack basic supplies; it denounces an economic war while infrastructure collapses due to decades of mismanagement. The crisis is not just an energy crisis: it is political, institutional, and moral.

The regime is digging in its heels because it knows that the legitimacy it inherited from the "historic generation" has eroded. The narrative of resistance no longer convinces a population facing hunger, blackouts, and repression. International propaganda can no longer hide the fragility of a system that has exhausted all its promises. And external allies, though still present, are watching with concern as the country slides toward irreversible decline.

Cuba is entering a phase where the crisis and propaganda are advancing in parallel, but in opposite directions. The elite celebrates, denounces, and rallies; the people protest, resist, and suffer. Political entrenchment will not stop the collapse; it will

only make it more evident. And the island's immediate future hangs in the balance amid this contrast—between official rhetoric and the reality of the dark streets.

The Cuban exodus is accelerating: more than 120,000 departures in 18 months as Brazil emerges as a new escape route

BY PLC ON AUGUST 11, 2026, 7:15 A.M. |

[CUBA](#), [UNITED STATES](#), [LATIN AMERICA](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



In the last 18 months, at least between 120,000 and 150,000 Cubans have left the country. Photo © PLC

CUBA-EXODUS

Stockholm. PLC | The departure of Cubans to South America is part of a larger phenomenon: the mass exodus from the island. Although Cuba does not publish official statistics, data from receiving countries and the International Organization for Migration make it possible to estimate the scale of the displacement. In the last 18 months, at least between 120,000 and 150,000 Cubans have left the country. This figure stems from the consolidation of three major routes. The first, to the United States, recorded 33,056 arrivals in fiscal year 2025, while ICE detained 42,000 Cubans within the country between January 2025 and April 2026, many of them recent arrivals. The second route, through Central America, shows a decline in transit through Honduras—from 64,000 irregular entries in 2024 to 17,000 in 2025 and just 1,500 in the first months of 2026—but maintains a steady flow toward Guatemala and Costa Rica. The third route, through South America, is growing the most: Brazil tripled its net regular migration from 2,100 in 2024 to 6,400 in 2025, while Uruguay went from a monthly average of 500 Cuban migrants in 2024 to 1,246 in 2025.

This year, Brazil has become an unexpected escape route for thousands of Cubans seeking to leave the island amid economic deterioration and a lack of prospects.

Between January and June, 20,372 Cuban migrants filed asylum applications in that country, according to figures from the Observatory of International Migration and the Federal Police. This trend confirms a regional shift: South America is no longer just a corridor to the United States, but a destination in its own right.

In addition to these figures, there are lesser-known routes—such as those through Mexico, Guyana, and Nicaragua—that serve as points of departure or transit, and for which data is not systematically reported. The lack of official Cuban statistics means we must rely on estimates, but they all point to the same pattern: the exodus continues unabated and is diversifying. Cuban migration no longer depends exclusively on the U.S. border; it is expanding to countries that offer more accessible asylum processes, job opportunities, and less restrictive immigration policies.

The result is a fragmented but unmistakable migration map. Thousands of Cubans continue to leave the island every month, driven by the economic crisis, food insecurity, a lack of basic services, and the absence of structural reforms. Brazil, Uruguay, and other countries in the region have become unexpected destinations for an exodus that, far from diminishing, appears to be consolidating as one of the most intense in Latin America over the past decade.

Cuba Enters Its Darkest Week: Three Days Without Electricity, Water, or Gas as the Energy Crisis Worsens

BY PLC ON AUGUST 10, 2026, 8:02 P.M. | [CUBA](#), [ECONOMY](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



Power restoration is proceeding extremely slowly. In Havana, the UNE reported that only 108 of the 286 circuits have had service restored, which amounts to 38% of the capital. More than 325,000 customers remain without electricity. Photo courtesy of Alas Tensas.

CUBA-POWER OUTAGES

Havana. PLC / Cuba is experiencing one of the worst energy crises in its recent history. For three consecutive days, nearly the entire island was without electricity, leading to disruptions in water, gas, banking services, transportation, and communications, according to reports from the Electric Union (UNE) and international agencies.

Power restoration is proceeding extremely slowly. In Havana, the UNE reported that only **108 of the 286 circuits** have had service restored, which amounts to 38% of the capital. More than 325,000 customers remain without electricity.

The country is also facing prolonged blackouts lasting more than 20 hours a day in the capital and several consecutive days in inland provinces, while the UNE warns that up to 70% of the national territory could be simultaneously without power during peak demand hours.

Entire families are sleeping in hallways or doorways to escape the suffocating heat. State-owned banks are seeing endless lines because the blackouts have paralyzed digital payments and cash withdrawals. “No electricity, no water, and no gas,” a

mother from Havana told EFE, resigned to the lack of answers and afraid to publicly express her discontent.

The government acknowledges that the situation of the National Electric Power System is “critical” and “extremely tense.”

Independent studies estimate that Cuba would need between \$8 billion and \$10 billion to revive its energy system—an unattainable figure for a state-run economy that could contract by 6.5% this year following five years of cumulative decline.

The island is thus experiencing a week marked by darkness, exhaustion, and uncertainty. Electricity returns for a few hours and then disappears without warning. Nights are filled with candles, mosquitoes, and heat. And the entire country, caught between internal obsolescence and external pressure, faces a crisis that is no longer just an energy crisis: it is social, economic, and profoundly human.

The Strategic Dilemma of the Oil Embargo on Cuba

BY PLC ON AUGUST 10, 2026, 2:46 P.M. |
[CUBA](#), [ECONOMY](#), [UNITED STATES](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



Photo: Fuel shipments from Florida and Louisiana, authorized by OFAC, social media.

CUBA-U.S.

Stockholm. PLC Analysis | U.S. energy policy toward Cuba has entered a paradoxical phase: while it imposes severe sanctions to cut off the regime's supply of hydrocarbons, it simultaneously allows—under specific licenses—the shipment of fuel in drums to Cuban “private” companies. This duality reveals both the complexity of the U.S. approach and its strategic limitations. Above all, it exposes an uncomfortable truth: the pressure falls on the population, not on the ruling elite.

Fuel shipments from Florida and Louisiana, authorized by OFAC under the category of support for the private sector, are presented as a way to strengthen micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and weaken the Cuban state. But in practice, the line between private enterprises and parastatal enterprises in Cuba is blurred. Many of these entities operate under the supervision of GAESA or structures linked to the Communist Party. Fuel enters through state channels, is distributed via state intermediaries, and ultimately benefits actors who, although registered as private, are part of the regime's economic ecosystem. It is a controlled liberalization, designed so that nothing escapes the central apparatus.

This nuance is crucial to understanding the message from Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who has hinted that a solution to Cuba's problems may take time. Rubio acknowledges that energy pressure works, but also that the regime has greater resilience than anticipated. During that time—months, perhaps years—it is the citizens who pay the price: those suffering 20- to 30-hour power outages, those

protesting by banging on pots and pans, and those watching hospitals, schools, and basic services collapse. The elite, on the other hand, retain their privileges, maintain their access to generators, fuel, and resources, and continue to organize international events to project an image of ideological strength.

The contradiction is clear. While Washington tries to strangle the regime, Havana hosts meetings of communist parties, receives foreign delegations, inaugurates symbolic projects, and puts forward a narrative of heroic resistance. Far from weakening its rhetoric, the energy crisis fuels it: every blackout becomes proof of the “imperial blockade,” every protest evidence of the “hybrid war,” and every sanction an argument for reinforcing internal discipline. The regime transforms external pressure into ideological cohesion, and the population is caught between shortages and propaganda.

The fundamental question is whether this U.S. strategy is achieving its objectives. The answer, for now, is mixed. It has weakened the state’s infrastructure, sparked unprecedented protests, and exposed the fragility of the Cuban model. But it has also allowed the regime to reinforce its victim narrative, seek support from China and Russia, and maintain its control over strategic sectors. The policy is not erratic, but neither is it sufficient. It is a tool of attrition, not a roadmap toward transition.

The moral dilemma is inescapable: How long can a strategy that punishes the people more than the elite be sustained? How long can a society subjected to blackouts, long lines, hunger, and repression hold out? To what extent can the regime exploit the ambiguity of the sanctions to present itself as an anti-imperialist bastion while receiving fuel in drums and organizing international conferences?

The energy pressure has opened cracks, but those cracks will not lead to change without a political strategy to accompany the attrition. The United States can cut off oil, but it cannot—through sanctions alone—build a democratic alternative within Cuba. The ruling elite has shown that it can survive in the dark; it is the citizens who cannot.

The oil embargo has revealed the regime’s vulnerability, but also the urgency of a policy that does not turn the Cuban people into collateral damage. The transition will not come about spontaneously. It requires strategic clarity, regional support, and a vision that goes beyond energy sanctions. In the meantime, Cuba remains in the dark, and the elite remains in the light.

The Silent War Already Raging in Europe

BY PLC ON AUGUST 10, 2026, 9:25 A.M. |

[EUROPE](#), [INTERNATIONAL](#), [RUSSIA](#), [LATEST NEWS](#), AND [EUROPEAN UNION](#)



The concern is not limited to Germany. Suspicious drones have recently crossed Polish territory and violated Romanian airspace, according to European reports. In recent months, hundreds of drones have been detected at civilian airports in Spain, military bases in Poland, and strategic areas in Norway, Bulgaria, and Denmark. Photo © PLC/IA

RUSSIA-U.S./NATO

Stockholm. PLC | The signs of a new phase in the conflict between Russia and the West are no longer abstract: they are unfolding on European soil and taking forms designed to avoid crossing the threshold into open war. U.S. intelligence, cited by *CBS News* and *The Washington Post*—as reported by [WP](#)—maintains that Vladimir Putin is adjusting his strategy to test NATO's cohesion through covert operations, sabotage, and hybrid pressure. The goal is not to trigger a direct confrontation, but to test the limits of Western unity and, in particular, how the Donald Trump administration would react to a sudden crisis.

Recent incidents in Germany are the clearest example of this silent escalation. At the [Leipzig airport](#)—one of the main logistics hubs for shipping weapons to Ukraine—authorities found a drone loaded with explosives just a few meters from a Ukrainian Antonov aircraft. The detonator failed, but the strategic message was clear. Hours later, a DHL cargo plane that had aborted its landing due to the alert was struck by another object—presumably another drone—and had to divert to Hanover with minor damage. Germany has not officially identified anyone responsible, but all eyes are on Moscow, and NATO sources cited by *Clarín* link the incident to previous patterns of operations by Russia's GRU.

The concern is not limited to Germany. Suspicious drones have recently crossed Polish territory and violated Romanian airspace, according to European reports. In recent months, hundreds of drones have been detected at civilian airports in Spain, military bases in Poland, and strategic areas in Norway, Bulgaria, and Denmark. Some airports, such as Copenhagen, even suspended flights due to the presence of these devices. Experts consulted by *DW* warn that defenses against drones remain insufficient and that Europe's critical infrastructure is vulnerable to this type of hybrid attack.

German Interior Minister Alexander Dobrindt described the discovery in Leipzig as "a new threat scenario," emphasizing that Germany is already a daily target of espionage, sabotage, and covert operations. His warning echoes that of NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte, who stated in December that the alliance is "Russia's next target" and that Moscow might be prepared to use direct military force within five years.

This hybrid offensive is taking place as the Russian military suffers massive losses in Ukraine. According to U.S. estimates, Russia is losing around 30,000 soldiers per month, a rate that exceeds its recruitment capacity. CIA Director John Ratcliffe explained that Ukraine is using artificial intelligence to operate attack drones so effectively that Russian conscripts are killed or wounded within just 20 to 30 minutes of arriving at the front lines. These figures, cited by *CBS News*, paint a critical military picture for Moscow and help explain why the Kremlin may be seeking new forms of pressure that do not involve a direct clash with NATO.

The European strategic landscape is quietly being reshaped. Explosive drones, cyber intrusions, and acts of sabotage are not isolated incidents, but part of a campaign designed to test Western resilience and exploit any internal political fissures. The central question—how Washington will react to a hybrid crisis in Europe—is precisely the one Putin seems intent on answering without firing a single missile.

Europe thus faces a war not fought in trenches, but in airports, digital networks, and gray areas where attribution is difficult and the response uncertain. The testing phase has already begun, and the continent's stability will depend on how NATO manages this covert pressure, which seeks, above all, to test its limits.

Drug-related violence spills onto the internet: Mexico faces the era of live-streamed murders

BY PLC ON AUGUST 10, 2026, 8:02 A.M. |
[LATIN AMERICA](#), [MEXICO](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



In a country where organized crime has adapted its methods to the digital environment, every livestream can become a window for locating a target. The live killings of Gastélum and Márquez highlight how the line between public life and vulnerability has become blurred for those who build massive audiences. Photo of influencer César Gastélum on social media

MEXICO-MURDERS/CARTELS

Mexico City. PLC | The execution of César Gastélum during a live broadcast in Culiacán is not an isolated incident, but rather the latest symptom of a phenomenon that has been taking shape in Mexico since 2024: the transformation of influencers into targets of organized crime. Gastélum's death, which occurred on August 4, 2026, in front of thousands of viewers, is the latest in a string of murders that has placed content creators at the center of a criminal conflict being waged both on the streets and on screens.

Gastélum, known as "Cesarín," had amassed more than half a million followers on TikTok and a growing presence on Instagram and YouTube. His style—a mix of humor, regional music, and an aesthetic that at times flirted with the "war-like"—had made him a popular figure in Sinaloa. On the night of his murder, two men on a motorcycle pulled up to the parking lot of the restaurant where he was livestreaming, and one of them shot him in the head. The attack was captured on his livestream and on the restaurant's security cameras. The state prosecutor's office opened an investigation but has not made any arrests or released an official line on the case.

The case immediately drew parallels to another crime that had shocked the country: the femicide of Valeria Márquez, a beauty influencer murdered in May 2025 while livestreaming from a beauty salon in Zapopan, Jalisco. In her case, the assailants also used a motorcycle to facilitate their escape. The Jalisco Attorney General's Office arrested a suspect months later, but the motive remains under investigation.

The 2024 death of Leovardo Aispuro, “El Gordo Peruci”—who had appeared in a video alongside Gastélum—reinforced the perception that these crimes are not isolated incidents, but part of a recurring pattern in states where drug cartels have a strong presence. Sinaloa, Jalisco, and Guerrero account for the majority of these cases. Since 2024, at least 19 influencers have been murdered in Mexico, eight of them in Sinaloa, a state marked by a dispute between factions of the Sinaloa Cartel, particularly Los Chapitos and La Mayiza.

Mexican authorities are investigating whether some of these content creators had ties—real or perceived—to criminal groups. In January 2025, a leaflet dropped from small planes in Culiacán named 25 influencers and musicians as alleged collaborators with Los Chapitos, although no verified evidence was provided. At least six of the ten influencers murdered in Sinaloa since 2024 appeared in that document. Others, such as Gastélum, were not on the list but were executed amid the same climate of violence.

Beyond any possible ties, experts agree that constant exposure on social media—real-time locations, daily routines, friendships, and lifestyle—has become a risk factor. In a country where organized crime has adapted its methods to the digital environment, every live stream can become a window for locating a target. The live killings of Gastélum and Márquez highlight how the line between public life and vulnerability has become blurred for those who build massive audiences.

The phenomenon also reveals a transformation in the relationship between drug cartels and digital culture. Criminal groups have understood the power of audiences and seek to influence them, whether through intimidation, symbolic recruitment, or territorial control of the narrative. Some influencers adopt aesthetics associated with the criminal underworld to gain followers; others simply live in areas dominated by cartels and become targets by virtue of their proximity. In both cases, the line between entertainment and risk has become dangerously thin.

Violence against influencers poses an urgent challenge for Mexico. Content creators have become visible figures in the public sphere, yet they lack the protection protocols that exist for journalists or human rights defenders. The number of murders since 2024—19 documented cases, with peaks in 2025—shows that the phenomenon is not temporary but structural.

The death of César Gastélum, broadcast in real time, is a brutal reminder that organized crime has expanded its reach and now operates within the digital ecosystem as well. While authorities investigate whether these murders are part of a broader criminal strategy, thousands of young Mexicans continue to build audiences on social media, unaware that, in some regions, fame can become a death sentence.

The Silence of the Polls Reveals the True Limits of U.S. Policy Toward Cuba

BY PLC ON AUGUST 9, 2026, 10:54 A.M. |
[CUBA](#), [UNITED STATES](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



Major polling firms—Gallup, Pew Research Center, Ipsos, YouGov, Emerson College—have for years measured Americans’ perceptions of the use of military force, foreign policy, and global threats. But none has asked whether the United States should invade Cuba, intervene militarily on the island, or promote regime change. Photo © PLC/IA

U.S.-CUBA POLLS

New York. PLC | The discussion about Cuba in the United States is often marked by political statements, diplomatic pressure, and the expectations of the Cuban exile community. However, when attempting to gauge what American society truly thinks about a possible military intervention on the island or about the idea of Washington contributing to regime change, a crucial fact emerges: there are no national polls that directly address these questions. This statistical gap, far from being anecdotal, reveals the marginal position Cuba occupies on the U.S. public agenda and precisely defines the scope of any foreign policy toward Havana.

Major polling firms—Gallup, Pew Research Center, Ipsos, YouGov, and Emerson College—have for years measured Americans’ perceptions of the use of military force, foreign policy, and global threats. But none has asked whether the United States should invade Cuba, intervene militarily on the island, or promote regime change. The absence of such studies is no accident: Cuba does not appear as a

realistic scenario for conflict in the eyes of the American public, and polls are only designed when an issue is part of the national debate. For decades, the possibility of military action in Cuba has not been part of that debate.

What does exist, however, is indirect data that helps shed light on the context. Pew Research has shown that Americans are increasingly reluctant to use military force abroad, except in situations involving a direct threat or terrorism. Gallup has documented a growing strategic fatigue stemming from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. In this context, any intervention in Cuba—a country that poses no military threat to the United States—would be rejected by the majority of the population. No specific poll is needed to know this: the general trend is clear and consistent.

In contrast, the Cuban exile community in Florida holds a very different position. Although there are no systematic polls on support for an invasion, there are studies on the political preferences of the exile community that show broad support for extreme pressure tactics and the demand for political change on the island. Exile organizations, local media, and community leaders have repeatedly stated that any solution that keeps the regime in power is unacceptable. The demand for a democratic transition is constant, even if it is not backed by national poll data.

This contrast between the absence of national polls and the intensity of sentiment among the Cuban exile community reveals a structural tension. Washington shapes its foreign policy within the limits set by its own society, and that society is unwilling to open a new military front. The exile community, on the other hand, views the Cuban issue as a matter of historical and moral urgency. The gap between these two perceptions shapes any strategy toward Havana: pressure may be sustained, the siege may be systematic, but military intervention is not a politically viable option in the United States.

The reality is that statistical silence is also a political statement. If there are no polls on an invasion or regime change in Cuba, it is because American society does not contemplate those possibilities. And if the Cuban exile community demands a definitive solution, it must understand that Washington's policy operates within a framework where domestic public opinion is the ultimate limit. Within that framework, the promise of irreversible change will depend less on rhetoric and more on the ability to sustain a strategy that is effective, realistic, and compatible with the constraints imposed by American democracy.

The Miami exile community questions Rubio's promise of a relentless siege against Havana

BY PLC ON AUGUST 9, 2026, 10:03 A.M. |

[CUBA](#), [THE UNITED STATES](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



In Miami, where generations of exiles with different political backgrounds come together, the Secretary of State's remarks have been met with a mix of hope, caution, and skepticism. Photo: PLC/IA

CUBA-EXILE MIAMI

Miami. PLC | Statements by U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio describing Washington's policy toward Cuba as a systematic, sustained siege with no escape routes for the ruling elite have sparked intense debate within the Cuban exile community in Miami. The idea of prolonged pressure is not new, but the way Rubio presents it—as a coherent, cumulative strategic framework designed to produce an irreversible outcome before the end of the decade—has reignited old doubts and sparked new expectations.

In Miami, where generations of exiles marked by different political experiences converge, the Secretary of State's words have been received with a mix of hope, caution, and skepticism. For the most hardline sectors of the exile community—those who lived through the first decades of confrontation with the regime—the notion of a prolonged siege arouses an almost automatic distrust. Too many times, decisive pressure has been announced only to be diluted by negotiations, partial openings, or tactical shifts that Havana exploits to buy time. From that perspective, the promise of a strategy “without escape valves” sounds more like a desired goal than a verifiable reality.

Other critics point to a structural contradiction: while Rubio insists on closing all flanks, Washington maintains channels of communication with Havana, including with figures in Raúl Castro's inner circle. For these groups, the coexistence of sanctions and dialogue is a long-standing problem that has undermined any policy of pressure. The regime, they argue, has demonstrated a remarkable ability to turn every conversation into a political reprieve and every gesture of openness into an argument for its narrative of resistance.

There is also a deeper skepticism regarding Rubio's assertion that Cuba will be on an "irreversible path toward a different future" by 2029. In Miami, where the regime has been seen to survive the Soviet collapse, the "Special Period," energy crises, sanctions of varying intensity, and the loss of allies, the word "irreversible" is met with caution. The resilience of the Cuban system—based on social control, selective repression, and economic adaptability—leads many to believe that any definitive prediction is, at the very least, risky.

However, there are also voices that acknowledge that the strategy described by Rubio introduces a new element: the accumulation of coordinated pressures on various fronts, ranging from financial sanctions to diplomatic isolation, including surveillance of the regime's international support networks. For these sectors, the prolonged siege is not a repetition of the traditional embargo, but a more sophisticated and multilateral version that could genuinely erode the Cuban government's ability to sustain its model.

The Cuban exile community in Miami—diverse and often fragmented—agrees on one essential point: any strategy toward Cuba must be clear in its objectives and consistent in its execution. The mistrust stems not only from historical experience but also from the perception that, all too often, U.S. policy toward the island has oscillated between pressure and complacency, between tough rhetoric and ambiguous practice.

Rubio's words have opened a necessary conversation. If a prolonged siege is truly Washington's policy, the exile community demands transparency, consistency, and measurable results. The promise of irreversible change is undoubtedly appealing. But in Miami, where political memory runs deep and expectations have been dashed more than once, that promise will only be credible when the strategy ceases to be a mere statement and becomes a verifiable process.

A Communist Gathering in a Country in Crisis: Havana Projects Solemnity as Cuba Crumbles

BY PLC ON AUGUST 9, 2026, 7:34 A.M. |

[CUBA](#), [INTERNATIONAL](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



Havana may host delegations from around the world, but it cannot guarantee economic stability. It may organize tributes to Fidel Castro, but it cannot ensure milk for the children. Photo: Cubadebate

CUBA-COMMUNISM

Havana. PLC | The 24th International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties (EIPCO) opened its sessions in Havana with the usual pomp and circumstance of political events organized by the Cuban government to project international influence. Delegations from dozens of parties, solemn speeches, tributes to Fidel Castro on his 100th birthday, and an impeccably prepared Convention Center set the stage for a forum that aims to reaffirm the relevance of the global communist movement. But that image stands in stark contrast to the reality of the host country: a Cuba mired in an economic, social, and humanitarian crisis that cannot be hidden behind red flags or anti-imperialist slogans.

The forum's motto—defending the legacy of the Revolution, deepening solidarity with socialist Cuba, and joining forces against imperialist aggression—seeks to project ideological cohesion at a time when international communism is experiencing a clear loss of global influence. However, the most urgent problem lies not in the forum's rhetoric, but in the context in which it is being held. While the Cuban government is deploying resources to host 118 parties from every continent, the population faces prolonged power outages, rampant inflation, food shortages, deteriorating basic services, and a mass exodus that has emptied neighborhoods, workplaces, and universities.

The contradiction is evident. The Cuban state, which claims it lacks the resources to provide milk, medicine, or public transportation, does have the funds to organize a multi-day international event, house delegations, ensure security, logistics, and transportation, and stage a spectacle intended to project political strength. For a few days, Havana becomes the capital of world communism, while Cubans continue to stand in line to buy rice, oil, or chicken at prices that exceed their monthly wages.

The EIPCO is presented as a forum for political coordination and ideological debate, but its holding in Cuba reveals another dimension: the government's need to bolster its international legitimacy at a time of domestic erosion. Miguel Díaz-Canel's presence at the opening ceremony, along with the tribute to Fidel Castro, seeks to project historical continuity and regional leadership. However, that narrative clashes with the reality of a country where the legitimacy of the political system is eroding every day—not because of external campaigns, but because of the state's inability to sustain daily life.

The participating parties speak of solidarity with Cuba, but that solidarity is expressed in speeches, not in solutions. None of the forum's debates addresses the Cuban economic crisis with the depth the situation demands. There is no discussion of the inflation that is devouring wages, the decline in domestic production, the brain drain, the loss of purchasing power, the energy crisis, or the collapse of strategic sectors. The forum focuses on denouncing imperialist aggression but avoids analyzing the internal factors that have led the country to its worst moment in decades.

The contrast between the solemnity of the EIPCO and the precariousness of life in Cuba is a symptom of a political model that prioritizes its international image over the needs of its people. Havana can host delegations from around the world, but it cannot guarantee economic stability. It can organize tributes to Fidel Castro, but it cannot ensure milk for children. It can bring together 118 communist parties, but it cannot stop the exodus of its own citizens.

The international gathering aims to pay tribute to the legacy of the Cuban Revolution. But for millions of Cubans, that legacy is no longer measured in speeches, but in the reality they face every day. And that reality is not transformed by ideological forums, but by profound changes that the government continues to avoid.

An ideological battle in an exhausted country: ALBA debates hegemony while Cuba faces its worst crisis

BY PLC ON AUGUST 9, 2026, 7:07 A.M. |
[CUBA](#), [CULTURE](#), [OPINION](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



Panelists agreed that communication cannot be an afterthought. But the focus on the media dispute comes at a time when leftist movements have suffered significant electoral defeats in countries where they were once dominant. Photo: Cubadebate.

CUBA-ALBA

Havana. PLC | The Fourth Continental Assembly of ALBA Movements, held in Havana, is taking place in a country facing one of the most severe economic and social crises in its recent history. While the Cuban government is deploying resources to host delegations from across the continent—providing lodging, transportation, security, and a flawless presentation—the population is grappling with power outages, unaffordable prices, chronic shortages, and a widespread deterioration of daily life. It is against this backdrop that the panel “Socialism in the Ideological and Cultural Battle” took place, where Abel Prieto, Alina Duarte, and Nina Fideles discussed the strategic importance of communication in the continental political struggle.

The emphasis on cultural hegemony—presented as a decisive front—contrasts with the reality of the host country: a state that fails to guarantee basic food supplies, faces accelerating inflation, and has lost the capacity to sustain essential services, yet mobilizes resources for international events designed to reinforce its political narrative. The ideological battle is waged in air-conditioned rooms while outside, people stand in line to get rice, oil, or chicken, and pay prices that far exceed

minimum and average wages. This disconnect between rhetoric and reality is part of the problem facing the Latin American left today.

The panelists agreed that communication cannot be treated as a secondary issue. But the emphasis on the media battle comes at a time when leftist projects have suffered significant electoral defeats in countries where they were once dominant. Media concentration does exist, as Nina Fideles pointed out when comparing Brazil's media structure to historical land concentration. However, that explanation is not enough to understand why broad sectors of society no longer support progressive governments, even in contexts where these governments had access to resources, institutions, and communication platforms.

Abel Prieto spoke of building our own tools to contest meanings, but the problem is not merely a lack of tools: it is the disconnect between the ideological frameworks of continental socialism and the real demands of societies that have changed faster than their discourses. In Cuba, this disconnect is evident. While ALBA is celebrated with international delegations, the country faces inflation exceeding 18 percent, food prices that outstrip monthly incomes, and a deterioration that cannot be attributed solely to external or media-related factors. Cultural hegemony cannot be sustained when everyday life is falling apart.

Alina Duarte emphasized the struggle for common sense, but even in Mexico, where Morena has achieved electoral victories, the cultural battle has not prevented internal tensions, political erosion, and rifts between popular movements and party structures. Cultural hegemony does not guarantee continuity or stability: it merely accompanies processes that must be sustained by concrete results.

The debate in Havana reveals a continental left that perceives itself as besieged by media and economic powers, yet avoids confronting its own strategic errors: bureaucratization, the lack of generational renewal, the inability to generate sustainable economic policies, and the tendency to explain every defeat as the result of external conspiracies. The ideological battle is real, but it cannot become a rhetorical refuge for avoiding an examination of political failures.

The Fourth Assembly of ALBA Movements insists that communication is a decisive front. But the real struggle today lies not only in the media: it lies in the left's ability to offer credible answers to societies that no longer accept epic rhetoric without tangible improvements. In Cuba, where the event is being held, this contradiction is particularly visible: a country attempting to project continental leadership while its population faces a crisis that no panel can hide.

Cultural hegemony is not regained by denouncing private media, but by rebuilding lost social trust. And that trust is regained only through results, not rhetoric

When the economy falls apart, prices speak for themselves: Cuba is now paying the price for an exhausted model

BY PLC ON AUGUST 9, 2026, 6:39 A.M. |
[CUBA](#), [ECONOMY](#), AND [LATEST NEWS](#)



A comparison of incomes and prices reveals the extent of the deterioration. The minimum wage is 3,210 pesos per month—insufficient to buy even a single liter of cooking oil in many provinces. Photo © PLC

CUBA-ECONOMY

Havana. PLC Analysis | The acceleration of inflation in Cuba is neither a temporary phenomenon nor a simple market imbalance: it is the most visible manifestation of an economic model that has lost the ability to sustain daily life. The jump in official year-over-year inflation from 15.89% in May to 18.27% in June 2026 confirms a trend that Cubans recognize without needing statistics: every month it becomes harder to put food on the table, and every government adjustment comes too late, is poorly implemented, and has no real impact on the prices that determine daily survival.

Food and beverages rose by 4.29% in June alone, with particularly steep increases in essential items such as cooking oil, which rose 14.79%, and pork, which rose 6.76%. But these official figures are merely a shadow of the true cost of living. In the informal market—where the majority of the population shops—prices operate on a different scale: a liter of oil can cost between 4,000 and 7,000 pesos; a carton of eggs, between 4,500 and 7,500; a bag of powdered milk, around 3,400. These prices are not driven by Cubans' actual incomes, but rather by shortages, the depreciation of the peso, and the growing dollarization of the economy.

A comparison of incomes and prices reveals the magnitude of the deterioration. The minimum wage is 3,210 pesos per month—insufficient to buy even a single liter of oil in many provinces. The average wage, at 6,930 pesos, offers little leeway either: in areas where a carton of eggs costs 7,500 pesos, it isn't even enough to buy 30 eggs. The ONEI may report 18% year-over-year inflation, but at the family dinner table, the reality is different: life has become unaffordable.

Economists such as Elías Amor insist that the root of the problem lies not with merchants or “price indiscipline,” but with the economic model enshrined in the 2019 Constitution. A model that prioritizes wage increases without productive backing, that maintains price caps and centralized pricing, that disrupts the natural relationship between supply and demand, and that generates structural inefficiency. In this environment, any attempt to regulate prices is a futile exercise: the real economy operates outside the state's framework, driven by scarcity and currency depreciation.

The elimination of price caps on certain imported products—presented as a measure to revitalize the private sector—has had the opposite effect: in a country that imports most of its food, lacks a strong currency, and has insufficient domestic production, deregulating prices amounts to shifting the crisis directly onto the consumer. The state is attempting to expand the private sector's scope without resolving the imbalances that force it to operate under conditions of survival rather than development.

Added to all this is the persistent impact of the “Tarea Ordenamiento” reform. The 2021 monetary reform, which promised to correct accumulated distortions, ended up multiplying prices, eroding wages, and accelerating the loss of purchasing power. Five years later, its effects are still felt: the currency has depreciated even further, production continues to decline, and shortages have become chronic. The result is a country where, according to estimates by independent economists, a Cuban would need around 96,000 pesos per month to cover basic needs. That is, nearly 30 minimum wages or 14 average wages. This figure does not describe an economy—it describes a social emergency.

Inflation in Cuba is not just an economic indicator. It is a symptom of a system that can no longer guarantee the essentials. Every price increase is a sign that the productive structure is broken, that the currency has lost its function, that the informal market has become the country's true barometer, and that families live in a permanent state of vulnerability.

The government can issue official statements, set profit margins, review import costs, or announce measures to “protect the people.” But as long as the foundations of the economic model remain unchanged, every action will be nothing more than a

Band-Aid on a deep fracture. Inflation isn't the problem—it's the mirror. And what it reflects is a country where the cost of living is rising because the system that should sustain it no longer works.

See you next week!

The Editorial Staff of Prensa Libre Cuba

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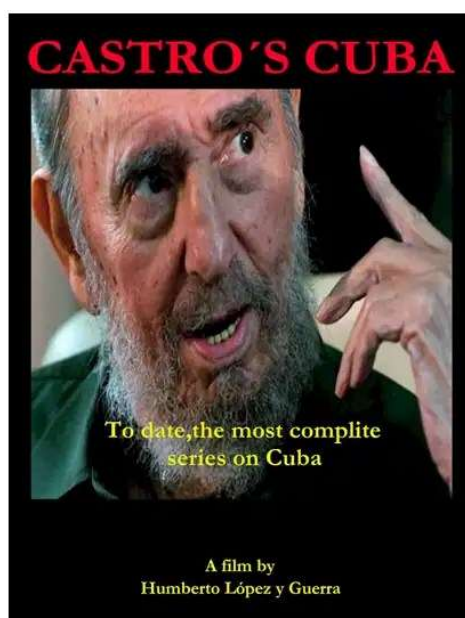
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