



World Federation of Public Health Associations
Fédération mondiale des associations de santé publique
Federación mundial de las asociaciones de salud pública

Health In Cuba and The U.S. Embargo

Passed by the WFPHA General Assembly - 1994

The World Federation of Public Health Associations,

Noting that for over 30 years the United States has maintained an embargo against Cuba- an embargo further tightened by "The Cuban Democracy Act of 1992"- that prohibits foreign subsidiaries of U.S. companies to trade with Cuba and bars merchant ships that stop at Cuban ports from the U.S. market for six months after they leave Cuba;

Noting further that the tightened U.S. embargo extends to trade in food, medicines, and medical supplies, which at the time of the bills passage comprised over 90 percent of Cuban trade with U.S. subsidiaries;

Realizing that with the termination of favorable trade relations with the former Soviet Union and Eastern European countries, which forced Cuba to drastically reduce all trade, and the tightened U.S. embargo; there is a severe shortage of food and medical supplies in Cuba;

Aware that Cuban health personnel report an increase in some infectious diseases, an increase in iron- deficiency anemia among pregnant women and young children, and a rise in the incidence of low-birth- weight babies, changes that the Ministry of Public Health attributes to problems in importation of food supplies; and that the neuropathy epidemic which appeared in late 1991 in Cuba is probably partly the result of nutritional deficiencies;

Concerned that the impressive advances achieved over the past three decades in the health of the Cuban people are in jeopardy due in part to the U.S. embargo;

Recalling that the United Nations General Assembly in November 1992 by an overwhelming vote expressed concern over "the promulgation and application by member states of laws and regulations whose extra-territorial effects affect the sovereignty of other States and the legitimate interests of entities or persons under their jurisdiction, and the freedom of trade and navigation" and called upon all countries "to refrain from promulgating or applying" such laws and measures "in conformity with their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law" and urged states that have such laws to repeal them;

1. URGES WFPHA Member Associations to actively work to increase scientific exchange with Cuba, search for ways to provide food and medical supplies to the country, and encourage



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their governments to trade with Cuba;

2. APPEALS to WHO Member States to actively pursue an end to the use of embargoes that impact vulnerable populations and jeopardize the public's health.