

Cuba Working Group

A Committee of the
Black Left Unity Network



Contact: cubaworkinggroup@gmail.com

View our documents at: www.blackeducator.org/cubasolidarity.htm

Press Release

Contact: Ashaki Binta, Co-Convener 203-379-7711

March 1, 2010

National: The Black Left Unity Network (BLUN) announces the formation of its Cuba Working Group (CWG) today. The CWG is a national network of activists and organizers who are concerned about the ongoing attacks against the nation of Cuba despite President Obama's proclamations of improving relations with the Cuban state in the Spring of 2009.

Most CWG members have traveled to Cuba and/or have been active in Cuban Solidarity work for many years and are familiar with the difficult challenges faced by the island over the last 50 years.

One of the latest attacks against Cuba was generated in the Black community late last year when a prominent group of African Americans signed on to a declaration originated by anti-Cuban activists in Latin America who accused the Cuban state of racism.

Signers of the accusatory declaration include preeminent figures such as Dr. Julianne Malveaux, Dr. Ron Walters, actress Ruby Dee, film maker Melvin Van Peebles, Dr. Kathleen Neal Cleaver, and Dr. Cornel West among many others. A list of 60 notable African Americans signed on to the document.

"Our consideration is that the accusation of racism against Cuba is disingenuous and is in fact intended to weaken solidarity between the African American community and Cuba which has historically been very strong," said Alberto Jones, a member of the CWG and a native Cuban residing in Miami.

"A further consequence of this attack would then be to increase the unjustified pressure on the Cuban state to abandon its socialist character and eliminate the crucial gains of the 1959 Cuban Revolution in providing education, healthcare, affordable housing, and a healthy cultural life for the Cuban people," the group said.

According to the CWG, the US government's historic blockade and ongoing programs to foment internal dissent within Cuba contribute significantly to weakening the island nation's ability to improve and advance the political, social, economic, and cultural gains of the revolution including the elimination of all forms of inequality and lingering remnants of slavery.

Despite this, says the CWG, Cuba has abolished institutional racism and has considerably improved the lives of all its citizens since the revolution including nearly eliminating illiteracy and vastly improving infant mortality rates to levels lower than those in the US, especially among African Americans. The Cuban nation has officially acknowledged that more than 60 percent of its citizens are of African descent.

"We believe that those who are concerned about racism in Cuba should be increasing pressure on the US government to end the blockade and other illegitimate attacks against that country, rather than signing on to specious accusations that do nothing to help the people of Cuba," the group said.

The Black Left Unity Network (BLUN) was formed in May of 2008 to strengthen and revitalize the Black Freedom Movement in the United States. The BLUN Cuba Working Group was instituted in January this year to help educate the African American community about the importance of Revolutionary Cuba in the international fight against all forms of discrimination, exploitation, and oppression and about Cuba's historic solidarity with the struggle for freedom of the African American people.