



Highlights of Cuba Archive's work on Cuba's Trafficking in Persons and International Medical Missions, 2010-2023

I. Published academic work

Maria C. Werlau, "[Cuba-Venezuela's Health Diplomacy: The Politics of Humanitarianism](#)," *Cuba in Transition: Volume 20*, Nov. 2010.

Maria C. Werlau, "[Cuba's business of humanitarianism: the medical mission in Haiti](#)," *Cuba in Transition: Volume 21*, Nov. 2011.

Maria C. Werlau, "Cuba's health-care diplomacy: the business of humanitarianism," *World Affairs Journal*, Mar-Apr 2013.

Maria Werlau, "[La diplomacia médica cubana: un negocio de trata de personas con fachada 'humanitaria'](#)," *Revista Foro Cubano*, Vol. 2, No. 7, Apr. 2019, Univ. Sergio Arboleda (Colombia).

Maria C. Werlau, "La 'colaboración' médica internacional de Cuba: un gigantesco negocio de tráfico laboral con fachada altruista", **chapter in book** [Los Mitos de la Revolución cubana](#), 2022, Univ. Sergio Arboleda (Colombia).

II. Opinion Editorials

"[Cuba's Cash-for-Doctors Program](#)," *The Wall Street Journal*, Aug. 16, 2010.
Also in Spanish: "[El programa de médicos por efectivo de Cuba](#)"

"[Cuba's partners in human exploitation](#)," *The Miami Herald*, Dec. 5, 2012.

"[¿Un Nobel de la Paz por la explotación laboral?](#)," *Infobae*, Aug. 16, 2020.

III. White Paper/Reports

[Overview of Cuba's medical brigades](#), 2022 and prior editions.

*Published for many years and updated over time. Also published in [Spanish](#).

"[Cuba's human trafficking business: a huge state-run enterprise](#)," **Urgent Report to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons**, Apr. 14, 2017.

[“The systematic violation of the Convention Against Torture of Cuba’s “internationalist” medical missions,”](#) **Submission to the United Nations Committee Against Torture**, Mar. 2022.

[“Uruguay y la diplomacia médica cubana,”](#) Jun. 2022.

[“Guatemala y la diplomacia médica cubana,”](#) Sep. 2020.

[“Argentina y la diplomacia médica cubana,”](#) Aug. 2020.

[Information for the 2023 Trafficking in Persons Report](#), submitted to the **Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons** of the U.S. Department of State, Feb. 1, 2023 (and prior annual reports in 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022).

IV. Educational/Advocacy Activities

1. [Presentation](#) on **Cuba’s medical missions in Venezuela**, presentation at the 20th Annual Conference of the Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy, July 29–31, 2010, Miami.

*A paper was discussed at the conference and subsequently published in Nov. 2010.

2. **Advocacy tour of South American countries Argentina, Chile, Perú, Uruguay**, Sep. 2010 (hosted/coordinated by Freedom House).

Cuba Archive’s Director prioritized the theme of Cuba’s trafficking/forced labor in the international medical missions at most meetings, which included members of Congress, Ministers, and the President in the case of Uruguay.

3. [Presentation](#) on **Cuba’s Medical Mission in Haiti** at the 21st Annual Conference of the Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy, Miami, Aug. 4-6, 2011.

*A paper was discussed at the conference and subsequently published in Nov. 2011.

4. Presentation/Roundtable Discussion in Cuba’s trafficking forced labor/international medical missions at the **European Parliament**, Brussels, Jun. 2016.

Hosted by Beatriz Becerra, Vice President of the European Union’s Commission on Human Rights, attended by 12 parliamentarians of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) with some staffers.

**Led to the Portuguese MP Jose Ignacio Fariás to present an [official inquiry](#) to the Portuguese parliament on the Cuban medical mission on Jun. 20, 2016.*

5. **Testimony to the U.S. Congress**, Washington, D.C., Mar. 22, 2016.

Cuba Archive’s Executive Director, U.S. House of Representatives’ [Hearing](#) of the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations Committee on Foreign Affairs, “Get it right this time: a victims-centered trafficking in persons report.”

6. Meeting with Gloria Rodríguez, head of the **Human Rights Committee of the Uruguayan House of Representatives**, Montevideo, Oct. 20, 2017.

7. Private meetings with staff of the United Nations Special Rapporteurs on Trafficking in Persons and on Migration, Geneva, April 2018.

It was agreed that specific testimonies from the medical internationalists would be submitted to the Rapporteur, in support of Cuba Archive's [2017 report](#), so that a letter could be issued requesting an explanation from the Cuban government. It was also suggested that at least one other rapporteur be involved so a joint letter could be prepared.

**Led to a letter from the Special Rapporteurs on Trafficking in Persons and on Contemporary Forms of Slavery of Nov. 6, 2019 to the Government of Cuba. (The latter responded in writing on Jan. 3, 2020 denying all allegations.)*

8. Meeting with country delegations from Norway, France, Finland, U.S., and Chile to the UN Human Rights Council regarding Cuba's Universal Periodic Review, Geneva, Apr. 2018.

Highlighted violations related to Cuba's international medical missions.

**The medical brigades were mentioned in the [Report](#) of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Sep. 2018.*

9. Briefed officers of the **U.S. Department of State's Office of Trafficking in Persons** at their request and sent them information on Cuba's forced labor/trafficking, annually from 2012 to 2015. (Annual written reports have been officially submitted to this office from 2019 to 2023.)

10. Event at the **Organization of American States**, Dec. 18, 2019. "[The dark reality behind the Cuban medical missions.](#)" (Helped coordinate and Executive Director was a panel participant.)

11. NGO Webinar "[El lado oscuro de las misiones médicas cubanas,](#)" with **Instituto Político para la Libertad (Peru)**, May 19, 2020.

12. NGO Webinar: "[Argentina: La diplomacia médica cubana, una amenaza a la libertad,](#)" **Fundación Libertad (Argentina)**, Jul. 1, 2020.

13. "[The human cost of Cuban Medical Brigades.](#)" **Oslo Freedom Forum**, Sep. 24, 2020.

**The forum was held virtually due to the pandemic.*

14. **Campaign to counter the Nobel Peace nomination of Cuba's emergency medical brigade.**

- [Letter](#) to the Nobel Committee, Sep. 2020.
- [Letter](#) to the Nobel Committee from Cuban doctors, Aug. 2021.

15. "[Médicos Cubanos Libres](#)" **initiative launched in 2020** to connect Cuban doctors willing to work directly and independently with governments hiring or seeking to hire doctors from the Cuban regime.

V. Dissemination/Media Coverage

"[Médicos que participam de intercâmbio enfrentam na Venezuela restrições e vigilância da vida pessoal,](#)" **Folha de S. Paulo (Brazil)**, Dec. 12, 2010.

"[¿Está justificada la fama de la calidad de los médicos cubanos?](#)" **BBC Mundo**, Oct. 23, 2014.

"[La dictadura cubana y su diplomacia de las batas blancas,](#)" **ABC (Spain)**, Oct. 24, 2014.

[“Cuba infiltrou militares no programa Mais Médicos,”](#) *Diário Poder (Brazil)*, Oct. 16, 2014.

[“Cuba’s slave trade in doctors,”](#) *The Wall Street Journal*, Nov. 9, 2014.

[“To fight Ebola, Cuba is sending its biggest export - doctors,”](#) *Newsweek*, Dec. 15, 2014.

[“Dispatches: Cuba’s medical missions,”](#) *Americas Quarterly*, Apr. 10, 2015.

[“Nuevas cifras revelan cuánto gana Cuba con la exportación de profesionales,”](#) *El Nuevo Herald*, Apr. 18, 2017.

[“Cuba will lose millions in revenue if it pulls its doctors out of Brazil,”](#) *The Miami Herald*, Nov. 16, 2018 (also *El Nuevo Herald*, [front page](#)).

[“Esclavos cubanos de exportación,”](#) por Ian Vásquez, *El Comercio (Peru)*, Nov. 20, 2018.

[“Crece la presión contra el régimen cubano, acusado de «tráfico humano» y «esclavitud»,”](#) *ABC (Spain)*, Jan. 14, 2019.

[“Cuba’s secret deal with Qatar to take up to 90% of doctors' wages,”](#) *The Guardian (U.K.)*, Nov. 8, 2019.

[“A cubana que pede indenização nos EUA por trabalho escravo no Mais Médicos,”](#) *BBC News Brasil*, Oct. 17, 2019.

[“The U.S. is pushing Latin American allies to send their Cuban doctors packing — and several have,”](#) *The Washington Post*, Jan. 21, 2020.

[“La fábrica de médicos cubanos y los dólares “humanitarios” para mantener al régimen de La Habana,”](#) *Infobae*, Apr. 23, 2020.

[“Médicos cubanos S.A. en lucha contra el coronavirus, la Revolución con estetoscopio,”](#) *El Independiente (Spain)*, May 3, 2020.

[“Cuatro gobernadores quieren traer médicos para pagarle al gobierno de Cuba,”](#) *Peru21*, May 22, 2020.

[“Los desertores cubanos, y disfrazados, del Golfo Pérsico,”](#) *El Mundo (Spain)*, Jul. 10, 2020.

[“Sudáfrica pagará a Cuba más de 14 millones de dólares por salarios de la brigada médica,”](#) *CiberCuba*, Jun. 9, 2020.

Streaming [program](#) with influencer **Alex Otaola/Cubanos por el mundo**, May 7, 2020.

[“Le mystère des médecins cubains,”](#) *Le Pointe (France)*, Sep. 7, 2020.

[“Guatemala quiere terminar multimillonario contrato de las misiones médicas con Cuba,”](#) *El Nuevo Herald*, Aug. 29, 2020.

Documentary [“The myth of Cuban healthcare,”](#) **Reason TV**, Apr. 2022.

Many other TV and radio interviews in NTN24, Peru21, Radio Televisión Martí, America Teve, MegaTV, Public TV, EWTN, ContraCorriente, and others.

VI. Other Activities

1. Prompted a Brazilian congressional inquiry that led to the eventual cancellation of a large pharmaceutical import contract with Cuba.

In 2013, provided information to Member of Congress Arnold de Olivera and two Brazilian journalists that led to an investigation that uncovered improper pharmaceutical imports from Cuba for \$500 million and the cancellation of the contracts.

See: “[Solicito informaciones ao Ministro da Saude acerca da importacao de sangue, componentes e hemoderivados de Cuba](#),” Camara dos Deputados de Brasil, Feb. 26, 2014; and Rolando Cartaya, “[Brasil se aburre de pagar el doble a Cuba por dudoso contrato de tecnologia farmacéutica](#),” Radio Televisión Martí, Dec. 7, 2017.

2. Provided assistance for the preparation of a [report](#) by Human Rights Foundation published in 2022.

Guided and provided information to the report’s author, and coordinated joint interviews of two doctors for HRF to access to direct testimonies.

3. Provided the organization Prisoners Defenders foundational base on forced labor/international medical missions.

In November 2018, Cuba Archive’s Executive Director briefed Javier Larrondo (then representing UNPACU) and jurist Jesús Blas Imbroda on the violations in Cuba’s forced labor and international medical missions, and [proposed](#) their inclusion in a filing against Cuba for the International Criminal Court, ICC. Extensive information was provided on the issue, which was subsequently [included](#) in the case, in fact becoming the only violation presented to the ICC. In the understanding that Larrondo would be working jointly with Cuba Archive, he was provided extensive information, contacts, a comprehensive survey for doctors, a network of doctors to survey, and the organization’s work plan. He formed an NGO instead to pursue the work independently.

4. For other publications and activities on Cuba health issues, see CubaSalud.org in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

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