

Observation on Cuban Youth Human Rights Condition

Overview

1. There are over 2,200 social organizations in Cuba, among which Cuban College Students Federation, Cuban High School Students Federation, José Martí Pioneers Organization, Youth Technical Brigade play a prominent role in the youth field. Relying on the youth organization network and their mobilization ability, Cuban government maintains smooth channel for young people to enjoy basic human rights such as political participation, education, employment, health and culture.
2. ACYF and its subordinate youth organizations maintain long-term friendly exchanges with the Cuban youth organizations. In the bilateral personnel exchanges and experience sharing, the ACYF and its subordinate youth organizations have an in-depth observation on the basic human rights situation of Cuban young people, and recognize its progress made in this field in recent years.

Civil and Political Rights

3. Cuban democratic system is based on the principle *of the people, by the people and for the people*. Through the national political institutions and social organizations, including the youth social organizations, the Cuban people participate in the governance process and supervise the government within their legal framework. The Cuban government recognizes and encourages mass organizations and social organizations to represent the interests of their communities and mobilizes them to build and defend their countries. Like most countries, Cuban law provides mechanisms and forms to promote efficient public participation.
4. In the Cuban electoral process, all citizens, including young people, have the equal access to the highest public office. Elections are based on the candidate's ability and characters, not affected by his or her economic or financial situation. All mass organizations have the right to select, elect

and nominate candidates.

5. Cuban law provides that the right to make legislative proposals is not only for parliament members, but also for the society as a whole. Legislative proposals can be made by trade unions, student organizations, women organizations and social organizations. The Cuban government has implemented a policy to encourage blacks, mixed race, women and youth to run management positions, in order to ensure all the people to participate in the process of exercising the state power and enjoying the national wealth.

6. The Cuban Communist Youth Union was established in 1962 to exercise the functions of the Cuban Government's youth affairs department in accordance with Article 6 of the Cuban Constitution, with Cuban youth social organizations as a working object. As one member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the State Council, the first secretary of the National Committee of the Communist Youth Union can promptly reflect the needs or recommendations of the youth to the highest leadership of Cuba and transmit the youth work of the government to Cuban youth.

7. The secretary of the grass-roots committee or branch of the Communist Youth Union at various levels must attend the meetings of the Party committees and administrative leaders at the according level. Some of them are directly the members of the Party committees or administrative leadership. This mechanism has been basically implemented in Cuba, to ensure that the party committees and governments have the channel of communication with the youth groups. .

8. According to the Cuban Youth Research Center, as of 2016, Cuba's 15-34 year-olds totaled 2.96 million, which takes 26 percent of the country's population. Cuban youth development index has made significant progress in recent years. Areas such as youth education, employment, health care, welfare, civic participation have been in the forefront levels among Latin American countries. The index of youth

spending on social spending in Cuba is twice the average of the Latin American average, and the proportion of youth investment in Cuba's gross domestic product is four times the Latin American average.

9. Cuba insists on free education for all people for the long time. Citizens need not pay for fees for tuition, textbooks and course-related materials, and can get subsidy from government. Every year, about 20 percent of the government budget is used to support education. On average, 10 teachers distribute to every 100 students in Cuba, which has the higher teacher proportion compared with other countries.

10. The Cuba Communist Youth Union engages extensively in vocational training for young teachers to promote their all-round development. Facilities such as televisions, computers are popularized in primary and middle schools, so as to improve students' ability to gain knowledge and expand their vision. Juvenile summer camps, volunteer services are organized to strengthen young people's team spirit and sense of responsibility.

Recommendation:

11. Further improve the legal framework adaptable to local conditions to protect and promote the human rights of youth. Consider to formulate and promulgate Youth Law or long-term Youth Development Program.

12. Continuously strengthen the support to youth, especially in the field of education and employment, and set proper scheme and mechanism to encourage social participation of youth from non-public sectors.

13. Actively expand the communication and exchange channels between the youth of Cuba and other countries, promote the mutual understanding and pragmatic cooperation between young professionals from different countries, so as to provide more favorable conditions for the development of Cuban youth.