

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION**

PROGRAM: Western Hemisphere

APPROPRIATION CATEGORY: Economic Support Funds

PROJECT TITLE: Cuba

INTENDED 2010 OBLIGATION: \$20,000,000

The United States Department of State and USAID intend to obligate up to \$20,000,000 in FY 2009 Economic Support Funds (ESF) for human rights and civil society initiatives in support of the Cuban people. This notification is being submitted pursuant to section 634(a) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and sections 7015(c) and (f), and paragraph (f) of the Democracy Fund heading of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act (Div. H, P.L. 111-8), 2009.

Of the \$20 million in FY 2009 ESF allocated for Cuba, \$1.5 million will be used to support human rights initiatives, \$16 million will be used for civil society and media programs, and \$2.5 million will be used for program support. USAID/LAC will administer \$10.6 million of these funds, USAID/OTI will administer \$2.75 million, State/DRL will administer \$5.5 million, and State/WHA will administer \$1.15 million.

The Department and USAID are committed to implementing these programs with all due oversight and appropriate mechanisms that will help measure better results in support of the Cuban people. State and USAID will ensure these funds are allocated on a competitive basis and reach a broad representation of Cuban civil society; that as few funds as possible are spent outside of Cuba; and that funds support the activities of Cubans on the island who are working for peaceful and positive change. We look forward to continuing to review these programs with Congress to assess their efficacy.

Program Descriptions:

Program Area 2.1, Rule of Law and Human Rights (\$1.5 million FY 2009 ESF):

Implementer TBD: Political Prisoners and Increased Awareness of Human Rights
Amount: \$750,000 (USAID/LAC to administer)

These funds will be used to continue to provide humanitarian support to prisoners of conscience and their families. Funds may also be used to support democratic rule of law programs that promote, protest and defend human rights in Cuba.

People in Need: Political Prisoners

Amount: \$250,000 (USAID/LAC to administer)

These funds will be used to provide humanitarian support to families of Cuban political prisoners.

Implementer TBD: Political Prisoners

Amount: \$500,000 (State/DRL to administer)

These funds will support non-governmental organization partners in seeking to secure the release of Cuban political prisoners. Funds may also be used to provide humanitarian, logistical, and moral support to families of political prisoners in order to strengthen their ability to work together to advocate for political prisoners' rights and press for their release.

Program Area 2.4, Civil Society (\$16 million FY 2009 ESF):

International Republican Institute: Expanding Civil Society Networks

Amount: \$1,500,000 (USAID/LAC to administer)

These funds will support the provision of greater access to technology to facilitate communication among civil society networks, while strengthening and supporting their ability to act as agents of democratic change. The program also supports networks of opposition leaders, bloggers, entrepreneurs, and Afro-Cubans.

Freedom House: Strengthening Civil Society Organizations

Amount: \$900,000 (USAID/LAC to administer)

These funds will provide support and training to civil society actors with a focus on human rights defenders, religious and minority groups, labor activists, current Cuban opposition leaders as well as artists, musicians and bloggers. The program also provides training in new media technologies.

Institute for Sustainable Communities: Increasing Grassroots Participation

Amount: \$400,000 (USAID/LAC to administer)

These funds will be used to complete a feasibility study and implement community action programs in select communities. The program will identify local leaders, community issues, and available resources with the aim of designing a demand-driven community action program. Once leaders and communities are identified, the program will build the capacity of local leaders, empowering them to facilitate community action campaigns that will organize citizens to implement local projects with the aim of improving the quality of their day-to-day lives.

People in Need: Strengthening Civil Society Networks

Amount: \$200,000 (USAID/LAC to administer)

People in Need will work with independent civil society organization by developing needs assessments, providing equipment, training, seminars, information and project support.

Development Associates, Inc.: Increasing Access to Technology and New Media

Amount: \$2,600,000 (USAID/LAC to administer)

These funds will support the strengthening of independent Cuban civil society organizations and networks. The program will expand Cuban civil society networks and empower them to respond to needs on the island and promote democratic free expression.

Implementers TBD: Expanding Civil Society Networks

Amount: \$2,000,000 (USAID/LAC to administer)

These funds will be used to advance independent Cuban civil society by supporting activities aimed at improving information exchange to, from, and within the Cuban population. Programs will support civic campaigns initiated by members of civil society. These funds will also be used to encourage initiatives and programming that support the development of economic rights, especially among marginalized populations such as women and Afro-Cubans. Such civic-based programs will have the added benefit of promoting individual economic initiatives, thereby reducing reliance on the state.

Creative Associates: Outreach to New Sectors of Cuba Society

Amount: \$2,500,000 (USAID/DCHA/OTI to administer)

These funds will support OTI's existing contract, which seeks to reach out to new sectors of Cuban society to expand the network of independent actors working together toward positive, democratic change on the island. The program identifies emerging leaders and groups and creates "people-to-people" linkages between non-traditional civil society actors on the island and NGOs in the region. Organized as

a regional exchange program, these organizational linkages facilitate the strengthening of grassroots participation, organization and networking designed to coalesce citizens to work together at the local level on issues of common interest and concern to average Cubans. These funds will also be used to encourage initiatives and programming that support the development of economic rights, especially among marginalized populations such as women and Afro-Cubans. Such civic-based programs will have the added benefit of promoting individual economic initiatives, thereby reducing reliance on the state.

Implementer(s) TBD: Freedom of Expression

Amount: \$2,900,000 (State/DRL to administer)

These funds will support efforts to promote greater freedom of expression on the island, especially among performing artists, plastic artists, musicians, poets, writers, journalists, and bloggers. Objectives are to increase civic space for expressing opinions and sharing ideas, generate increased demand for information and for freedom of expression, create opportunities for networking, and strengthen Cuban civil society's ability to advocate for positive change. DRL anticipates that multiple grants will be awarded with these funds, via a competitive process.

Implementer TBD: Freedom of Religion

Amount: \$500,000 (State/DRL to administer)

These funds will support religious and spiritual groups' to exercise their religious beliefs, advocate for religious freedom, and network with other civil society groups to strengthen their ability to advocate for increased religious freedom.

Implementer TBD: Labor Rights/Freedom of Association

Amount: \$500,000 (State/DRL to administer)

These funds will be used to promote greater respect for labor rights on the island by assisting independent labor unions and/or labor organizations on the island to advocate for workers' rights and to inform the Cuban public about these rights as well as raise awareness of Cuban labor conditions internationally to generate international pressure on the Cuban government to reform its labor laws to conform to internationally recognized standards.

Implementer TBD: Women's Rights

Amount: \$350,000 (State/DRL to administer)

These funds will be used to strengthen the capacity of on-island independent Cuban civil society, especially women. Specifically, funds will support on-island efforts to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of women and girls and minimize the likelihood that they would participate in commercialized sex for economic reasons, including by raising awareness, educating women on their

rights, and strengthening women's ability to advocate for and network among themselves, as well as provide immediate support for victims of sexual exploitation.

Implementer TBD: Direct Civil Society Support

Amount: \$500,000 (State/DRL to administer)

These funds will be provided to NGO partners to assist groups and individuals on the island to support independent civil society initiatives.

Implementer(s) TBD: Increased Access to Information for Cubans

Amount: \$1,150,000 (State/WHA to administer)

These funds will support increasing access to uncensored information on the island by providing basic information technology skills to Cubans via long-distance training and through public diplomacy grants administered in Cuba to local organizations interested in providing technology training to its members. Funds will also support the capacity-building of Cubans who provide and disseminate uncensored information, including journalists, bloggers, librarians and teachers. Additionally funds will support the purchase of basic information technology supplies for use on the island.

Program Area 6.2, Administration and Oversight (\$2.5 million FY 2009 ESF):

These funds will support program management and oversight to ensure program accountability and facilitate the implementation of Cuba programming. These amounts reflect necessary oversight funding proportional to the amount of program funds each office/agency will administer. For State/WHA, additional administration and oversight funding is not necessary to administer its portion of this program funding.

USAID/LAC:	\$2,000,000
USAID/OTI:	\$250,000
<u>State/DRL:</u>	<u>\$250,000</u>
Total:	\$2,500,000