

Cuban Futures Conference 2015: Plenaries and seminars

<p>Opening Plenary</p> <p>9.30–10.30</p>	<p>December 17th and beyond Embassies have opened in Washington and Havana, the Miami Five are free, Cuba is off the US state sponsors of terrorism list and Obama–Raul handshakes have taken place; How did we get here? How do Cubans see the new opportunities and threats? An overview of what has happened since December, why it happened, how Cubans see it. Is it just regime change as usual but different tactics? Speakers – Dr Carlos Alzugaray, Arleen Rodriguez, Brian Wilson, Chair: Bernard Regan</p>
<p>10.35–11.35</p>	<p>Seminar Sessions 1</p>
<p>Seminar A (Council Chamber)</p>	<p>Influencing Power – Cuban democracy Cuba’s participatory democracy – how does it work and how do Cubans have a say in their future and society. How is the US trying to influence civil society? How might Cuba look after 2018 elections when Raul Castro stands down as President? Speakers – Lauren Collins Dr Antoni Kapcia, Rafael Hernández, Arleen Rodriguez Chair: Linda Perks</p>
<p>Seminar B (Room 2)</p>	<p>Economic challenges Updating the economic model-how is the Cuban economy looking 4 years into the ‘restructuring’? What role have trade unions played in influencing process? How can UK and EU support this? How successful has Cuba been in attracting foreign investment and what are the opportunities and challenges joint ventures and economic development provide? Speakers – Dr Steve Ludlam, Rt. Hon. Brian Wilson, Dr Carlos Alzugaray, Chair: Sue Michie</p>
<p>11.40–12.40</p>	<p>Seminar Sessions 2</p>
<p>Seminar C (Council Chamber)</p>	<p>Defending the gains of the Revolution – What the US can learn from Cuba Cuba is internationally recognised for the remarkable achievements it has made in health, education, culture, sport, women’s right and internationalism since the Revolution. How will it maintain these and what can the US learn from Cuba with the new opening in relations between the two countries?. Speakers – Dr Imti Choonara, Emily Kirk, Arleen Rodriguez, Chair: Dodie Weppler</p>

Seminar D (Room 2)	The blockade – where it’s at and how to end it 77% of Cubans were born under the blockade. How is it still affecting the economy and every day life in the country? What needs to happen in the US for it to end? What’s likely to happen at the next UN vote on 27 October 2015? Speakers – Bernard Regan, H.E. Teresita Vicente, Keith Bolender, Chair: Sue Michie
12.40–13.50	Lunch
Round table 13.50 – 15.00	Cuban perspectives on the Cuba–US relationship Panellists – Rafael Hernández, Carlos Alzugaray, Arleen Rodriguez Moderator – Victoria Brittain
15.05– 16.05	Seminar Session 3
Seminar E (Council Chamber)	US intervention – is it business as usual for US ‘regime change’ advocates? With up to \$30m already allocated for ‘pro democracy’ programmes in Cuba this year, USAID advertising for Cuba programme managers, is it business as usual for the US in its Cuba policy? Speakers – Dr Francisco Dominguez, Keith Bolender, Chair: Carole Regan
Seminar F (Room 2)	Cuba, ALBA US influence and intervention in the new Latin America Lessons and possibilities for the region. April 2015 saw the first OAS conference since 1962 that the US has permitted Cuba to participate in. This breakthrough has been largely due to pressure from other Latin American states, and especially members of ALBA. What do ALBA countries make of the changes and what are their regional priorities and common experiences of US relations and US intervention in internal affairs. What can countries learn from each other? Speakers – H.E. Guisell Morales Echaverry, Jorge Luis Garcia, H.E. Roberto Calzadilla, H.E. Rocio Maneiro, Chair: Adrian Weir
16.10–17.00	Closing Plenary

Cuban Futures: What next for Cuba? What next for international solidarity?

Changing events since December 17th have happened fast and there are many misconceptions regarding the US-Cuba relationship. Not least the perception that the Blockade is over and the two countries now have a normalised relationship. Cuba has just presented a motion to the United Nations once again demanding an end to the Blockade and there are many outstanding issues to be resolved not least the return of Guantánamo Bay and the issue of compensation for 50 years of US aggression.

What are the biggest threats now facing Cuba? What will the US do now? How can the international solidarity movement support Cuba now?

Speakers – Linda Perks, Carlos Alzugaray, Rob Miller(CSC) Chair: Jayne Fisher