**61 years too long – End the US blockade of Cuba**

This branch notes that 2023 marks the 61st anniversary of the US blockade of Cuba which is still in place despite 30 United Nations General Assembly votes calling for it to end. It is the longest economic blockade in history, has cost the economy more than 1,300 billion dollars, and causes shortages across all sectors of society in Cuba.

We recognise the increased hardships that Cubans face following the intensification of the blockade by President Trump who introduced a further 243 extra sanctions and measures, most of which remain in place under Joe Biden.

We note the COVID-19 pandemic the US blockade added to the suffering and loss of life on the island by preventing purchase and delivery of vital PPE equipment and medicines to treat patients. It also delayed the roll out Cuba’s vaccination programme. In 2021, international development agency Oxfam released a report calling for an end to the blockade and stated that “seeking to provoke hunger, especially during a global pandemic is unjust and immoral.”

We congratulate Cuba on its development of two vaccines and the full vaccination of over 90 per cent of its population in spite of the severe shortages caused by the blockade. We applaud Cuba’s efforts to ensure vaccine equity with its offer to make Cuban vaccines available at solidarity prices to low income countries, and we praise the heroic contribution of the 4,700 members of Cuban medical brigades who volunteered in 45 countries to help treat COVID-19 patients during the pandemic.

This branch believes that the US blockade is detrimental to the lives of all Cubans and especially the most vulnerable in society and support efforts to campaign for it to end.

We therefore resolve to:

• Affiliate to the Cuba Solidarity Campaign
• Support the Viva La Educación appeal to send educational equipment to Cuban schools in 2023