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Cubans in Angola: migration and labor among the regions of the South

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❖ Presentation

For the past four decades there has been a trend towards the increase of international migration flows among the regions of the South. In this regard, international organizations as for instance the International Organization for Migration (IOM) stated that, in 2014, 35% of international flows were marked by movements among southern nations. A considerable volume of these

◆ KEYWORDS

- Cuban emigration

- Angola

- Cuba-Africa Relations

- South-South flows

- Labor migration

flows included people migrating for the purpose of getting a paid job in another State and sending remittances for supporting their relatives at their places of origin.

The migration of Cubans to Angola is inserted in this process as another example of the circularity of people in the periphery of the capitalist system. How is this migration flow of Cubans to Angola related to the global and local context (nationally)? What are the characteristics of external migration of Cubans towards this destination? How does people build the social representation on migration towards Angola from the country of origin and what is its effect on the migration process? These are some of the questions that have prompted this research on such a contemporary issue.

Determining the performance of important factors involved in the migration process to Angola has been crucial. Some of these factors are: the evolution of Cuba and Angola and their relations, which have contextualized and shaped the migration process with their historic particularities; the strengthening of local in-



terconnections through Cubans who emigrated in this context and their specific characteristics and at the same time brought together local and global elements transferring to Cuba the features and dynamics of worldwide migration flows; and the social representation on the migration process towards this destination, which benefits its reproduction and continuation.

✚ Political analysis

In the Cuban contemporary context, mostly after the profound economic crisis by the early 1990's, external migrations increased and went through a diversification of receiving countries of the Cuban migration. In fact, migration became a strategy to face historical and structural conditions of national development, being economic and work-related factors the main causes of such flows.



It is worth highlighting the increasing presence of Cubans, from that moment on, in non-traditional destinations like Angola. Another factor that played a role in this process, in addition to historical and structural conditions in issuing and receiving centers, was multidimensional historical bonds between both States, which acted as transnational connections that favored intercultural dialogues and migration. This emigration was motivated by economic and work-related causes; emigrants are mainly white men, in active working-age and a high percentage of them are qualified.

Nonetheless, this trend to the increase and diversification of the Cuban external migration flow is in accordance with the characteristics of the global and regional scenario, which is highlighted by an ever growing regionalization of migration flows and South-South movements conditioned by the global economic reorganization of the capitalist system, the surge of attraction centers in the regions of the South, the restructuring of the international labor market and the strategies for controlling its resources and products, and the reemergence of South-South cooperation relations as an alternative for pushing international actors in the global power scheme. The particu-

lar traits of the migration process result from and at the same time modify this global context once migration is capable to perpetuate from the expansion of its networks.

* Proposals

In the short term:

1. Continue the improvement of the Cuban migration policy and its regulations in order to bring it closer to and make it more useful for Cubans residing anywhere in the world and favor the return of emigrants and the better use of their capacities for the national development.
2. Create favorable structural conditions nationally, as well as interstate mechanisms that allow and encourage those people (mostly professionals) living permanently abroad to be reintegrated regardless of their migration status. Besides, to strengthen co-



operation among those people and Cuban institutions in the scientific field through advice and exchange of experiences, methodologies and results.

3. Retake, more strongly, the rapprochement of the nation with its migration from dialogue spaces already held in 1994, 1995 and 2004. Consider the presence in such debates of representatives of the Cuban migration in all geographic areas of settlement, Cuban officials and leaders, representatives of the civil society and academicians and scholars on the migration subject so as to periodically assess the strategies and policies of the State according to the historic particularities of migration and the political attitudes towards it.

In the long term:

1. Go deep into the study of the Cuban external migration through social sciences and quantitative and qualitative methodol-



ogies by adjusting them to the reality and characteristics of contemporary migration; taking into account its geographic diversity, its composition namely economic and work-related, and its attitude expressed in the growing interest to be involved in national matters. In doing so, apply strategies for the national spreading of such scientific results and provide spaces for analyzing and studying this subject through its inclusion in college programs of study.

2. Favor dialogues among academicians in the field of social sciences, local and governmental authorities and the Cuban population in general on migration and its positive and negative impact on the socioeconomic development of the country so as to create the necessary conditions to continue readjusting the speech and institutional treatment on migration to the current reality, from the strategic perspective to outline protective regulations in terms of the preservation of the human capital as the target of national development.



3. In line with the above, design strategies for better spreading activities and positions of the Cuban migration throughout Cuba, mainly those supporting the Cuban socioeconomic project and its people.

4. Fight national structural causes that condition and determine Cuban migration by making more efficient and productive use of the high human potential of the island. That would be the only means external migration would cease to be a strategy to compensate distortions in the development of the nation that adversely affect and deepen the deterioration of its labor force.



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