

INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES RESOLUTION ON USA RELATIONS WITH CUBA

Background Statement

Since 1960, the United States has been alienated from Cuba through a trade embargo and the severing of diplomatic relations. In 1974, Senators Claiborne Pell and Jacob Javits made visits to Cuba and discussed the possibility of the easing of tensions. In 1975, further visits were made by Senators George McGovern and James Abourezk, and Representative Charles Whalen. In July 1975, the majority vote of the Organization of American States removed joint sanctions against Cuba and the USA concurred in that vote. The United States has now reduced trade restrictions to the point that foreign subsidiaries of the USA companies may trade with Cuba, with the limitation that not more than 20% of such trade shall include parts or components that originate in the USA. Also, permission has been given for vessels of other nations which are trading with Cuba to enter USA ports. A number of problems remain to be worked out before diplomatic recognition can take place. But it appears that the time has come when strong efforts should be made to normalize relationships.

Resolution

From the background of our Christian heritage and reinforced by the realities of society today, we affirm the interdependence of peoples and nations throughout the world. Efforts for world peace are aided as nations utilize all possible channels of communication, consultation, and mutually beneficial trade for the sharing of the world's knowledge and resources. As we move toward the 200th year of our nation's history, we are deeply conscious that the very survival of our world community depends upon efforts to make possible positive working relationships among all nations, on the basis of mutual respect for human values regardless of differing political and economical systems.

To this end, we commend the steps taken for communication and cooperation between the Governments of the United States and Cuba in recent years through such actions as the 1973 agreement to curb hijacking of ships and aircraft; the visits of several members of Congress to Cuba in 1974 and 1975; and actions taken in 1975 for easing the embargo on trade with Cuba; we urge that the United States Government continue to move as rapidly as possible toward removal of existing restriction on trade and the travel of U.S. citizens to Cuba, and take positive steps leading toward the establishment of full diplomatic relations with Cuba.

Adopted by the Board of International Ministries - November 1975

POLICY BASE

American Baptist Policy Statement on Human Rights

Our world is constantly being brought closer together...But at the same time there are strong negative forces at work among political, social and economic powers on national and international levels, producing conflict, isolation, and the deprivation of the rights of groups and individuals.

2. The right to the basic necessities of food, shelter, clothing and health care;

8. The right to develop skills and abilities, to utilize these in economic, political, social, intellectual and religious institutions, and to receive a just return for one's labor;

American Baptist Policy Statement on Military and Foreign Policy

Pursuit of Peace and Justice

Global understanding and cooperation are essential to the pursuit of peace. Our welfare is fundamentally linked to that of all people. National actions and priorities continually need to be reassessed in the light of this global interdependence. The needs and rights of all peoples must be respected if there is to be a solid foundation for peace.

International economic systems must transcend narrow national self-interests and provide a framework for global justice and peace.
