The Future of US-Cuba Economic Relations

June 10, 2004
The Biltmore Hotel
Coral Gables, Florida

a forum to enhance Florida’s strategic thinking and planning on Cuba
After the collapse of Cuba’s preferential trade regime with the communist bloc in the early 1990s, the island’s economy confronted its most severe crisis to date. Adjusting to this development required a reinsertion in the world economy. At the same time, changes in U.S. law allowed Cuba to purchase food and medicine from U.S. companies on a cash-only basis. In 2003, Cuba purchased $257 million in U.S. agricultural and food products. An economic and political opening on the island will present opportunities and challenges for the U.S. economy, the state of Florida, and Florida-based firms.
YOU ARE INVITED

The Future of US-Cuba Economic Relations: A Forum to Enhance Florida’s Strategic Thinking and Planning on Cuba is an opportunity to assess Cuba’s current trade profile, including its commerce with Florida in particular and the United States in general. In addition to providing an overview of the Cuban economy, the forum will identify possible future trends in trade and key sectors while analyzing implications for the state of Florida and its vital industries. We are pleased to offer a compelling one-day program to broaden the discourse on economic development opportunities, looking at both actual possibilities and those that would only be feasible with a future opening on the island and as allowed by U.S. law. A technocratic rather than a political approach will frame the discussion based on grounded, data-intensive analysis and likely future demand for investment and trade linkages. The Forum will provide an original perspective for analyzing Cuba’s economic potential and Florida’s eventual opportunities.

We seek to advance community knowledge on Cuba’s present and future trade relations and indicators that may support investment activities, exports and cooperative ventures between Cuba and Florida. Program sessions are designed to produce dialogue and shared awareness among the business, academic and policymaking communities.

We hope that you can join us in this ambitious endeavor to provide a range of perspectives on Cuba’s economic and trade initiatives and future challenges and opportunities. We look forward to welcoming you to the Forum.

Eduardo A. Gamarra, Ph.D.  
Director  
Latin American and Caribbean Center

Damián Fernández, Ph.D  
Director  
Cuban Research Institute

Patricia M. Hernández  
Partner  
Financial Institutions  
Holland & Knight LLP

Carla A. Cira  
Director  
Summit of the Americas Center

Mercedes M. Ponce  
Director  
Institute for International Professional Services
PROGRAM VISION

This Forum will assess Cuba’s current trade profile, in particular its growing commerce with the United States and Florida. Designed to identify potential trends and their possible consequences, it will bring to the forefront challenges and opportunities for Florida. We will address the following themes:

1. The adaptation of the Cuban economy in a post-Soviet world, the new economic strategies adopted, including economic priorities and mandates, and the diversification of trade partners.

2. The evolving status of U.S.-Cuba commercial relations.

3. Analysis of strategic sectors such as: IT/telecommunications, tourism, and agriculture, with discussions based on sectoral case studies.

The event is important for representatives of the legal, information technology and telecommunications, accounting, tourism and hospitality management, services, and agricultural sectors, as well as chambers of commerce officials, representatives of economic development organizations, members of the academic community, and Florida and U.S. policymakers.

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Sponsorship opportunities are available to support this event. Please contact Dr. Damián Fernández (305-348-1991/fernande@fiu.edu).
AGENDA (program subject to change)

7:30 am – 8:00 am Registration and Continental Breakfast

8:00 am – 8:30 am Welcome

Eduardo A. Gamarra, Director, Latin American and Caribbean Center
Damián Fernández, Director, Cuban Research Institute
Carl A. Cira, Director, Summit of the Americas Center
Mercedes M. Ponce, Director, Institute for International Professional Services
Patricia M. Hernández, Partner, Financial Institutions and International Law, Holland & Knight LLP

8:30 am – 9:45 am Cuba Economic Overview, Background and Profile: Current Challenges and Future Possibilities

Moderated by: José de la Torre, Dean, Chapman Graduate School of Business, Florida International University

Jorge Pérez-López, International Economist and Consultant
Philip Peters, Vice President, International Economic Programs, Lexington Institute; Advisor, Cuba Working Group, U.S. House of Representatives
Tim Lynch, Director, Center for Economic Forecasting and Analysis, Florida State University

9:45 am – 10:00 am Questions and Answers

10:00 am – 10:15 am Coffee Break

10:15 am – 11:30 am Current Experiences, Obstacles and Strategic Planning

Moderated by: George Foyo, Chair and CEO, LJ International, LLC

Mark Entwistle, Consultant and former ambassador of Canada to Cuba, 1993-1997
Tom M. Rial, Principal Consultant, Midwest AgriTrade; former director, Iowa Exports Assistance Center for the Greater Des Moines Chamber of Commerce

11:30 am -11:45 pm Questions and Answers

12:00 pm – 1:15 pm Lunch and Afternoon Keynote on “Thinking about Cuba’s Future: Regional Challenges and Opportunities”

Keynote Speaker: Mark B. Rosenberg, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Florida International University
1:15 pm – 2:30 pm Sectoral Analysis of Future Opportunities in Services and Agriculture

Moderated by: Damián Fernández, Director, Cuban Research Institute

Agriculture: James E. Ross, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, Courtesy Professor, University of Florida
Tourism: María Dolores Espino, Associate Professor, Business Administration, St. Thomas University

2:30 pm – 2:45 pm Questions and Answers

2:45 pm – 3:00 pm Coffee Break

3:00 pm – 4:00 pm Legal Framework for Conducting Business from the U.S. and Cuban Perspectives

Moderated by: Carl A. Cira, Director, Summit of the Americas Center

Patricia M. Hernández, Partner, Financial Institutions and International Law, Holland & Knight LLP
Additional Panelists: TBA

4:00 pm – 4:15 pm Questions and Answers

4:15 pm – 5:30 pm Exploring Steps to Forming Future Florida Action Plan on Cuba Trade

Moderated by: Sandra B. González-Levy, Terremark Worldwide, Inc.

Manny Mencia, Senior Vice President, International Trade and Business Development, Enterprise Florida
David Batt, International Trade Policy Consultant, Florida Chamber
Pedro A. Freyre, Chair, Free Cuba Committee, Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
Fernando Campo, Vice President, Latin America and the Caribbean, Citrix

5:30 pm – 5:45 pm Questions and Answers

5:45 pm – 6:00 pm Closing Remarks

Damián Fernández, Director, Cuban Research Institute

6:00 pm – 7:00 pm Reception
The **Future of**

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**REGISTRATION FORM**

**PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. **Deadline is June 4, 2004.

Name

Company

Address

City/State/Zip

Phone   Fax

E-mail

The registration fee is US$135.00. The fee covers breakfast buffet, lunch, reception and conference materials. Space is limited.

To confirm attendance please send this completed registration form with a check made payable to Florida International University to:

Florida International University  
Cuban Research Institute  
Attn: Susie Penley  
11200 S.W. 8 Street, DM-353  
Miami, Florida 33199

For hotel reservations, please contact Ms. Alex Lima at the Biltmore Hotel (305-445-1926).
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