

Study on Cuban work effectivity

A recently published (February) government study among 2,000 Cuban state businesses found that 60 percent of employees came late, left early or otherwise shirked their duties.

In about half of the cases involved employees who arrived late and about a fifth featured those who took too much time for lunch or other meal breaks. Leaving early was a problem 10 percent of the time, while state workers engaged in "unauthorized activities" in 5% of activities.

The report didn't address one of the big workplace problems the government has complained about in the past: state employees who steal government goods to sell on the black market.

In Cuba most of the people works for the state where monthly salaries average 414 pesos (about \$20) however so far the communist system provides free health care, education through college and food rations.

Recently there were a few warning from government officials including Raul Castro, that such a high level of government subsidies is unsustainable unless productivity increases.

Sources: AP, Miami Herald

Cuba under the UN Human Rights Council Periodic Review, February 2009

The reports submitted by the Cuban representatives for the periodic review misrepresented the real situation in the island according to human rights NGOs. The main concerns are about restrictions on fundamental freedoms, keeping in prison political prisoners; arbitrary arrests, detention without charge or trial, and unfair trials; intimidation of dissidents; the death penalty; restrictions on human rights monitoring.

Western countries like Great Britain, Canada called Cuban government to change the law which prevents freedom of speech. They also called Cuban authorities to release all political prisoners.

The Cuban government representatives during the session rejected appeals to release political prisoners and allow independent media. The Cuban delegation concluded that most of the appeals don't take into account real situation on the Island and are connected with lack of knowledge about circumstances in Cuba.

The UN Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is a mechanism, which is meant to review the human rights records of all 192 UN member states, once every four years. According to the Council's Institution-Building Package of 2007, UPR's objectives are to achieve "the improvement of the human rights situation on the ground" in the country under review, and "the fulfillment of the State's human rights obligations and commitments." Reviews are to be conducted in an "objective," "non-selective" and "non politicized" manner.

Sources: REUTERS, PAP, Cuba Study Group