

DOING BUSINESS WITH CUBA



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Caribbean Export Development Agency
P.O.Box 34B, Brittons Hill
St. Michael
BARBADOS
Tel: 246-436-0578; Fax: 246-436-9999
E-mail: info@carib-export.com
Website: www.carib-export.com

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1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Official Name: Cuba

Area: 110 860 square kilometers (44 210 square miles).

Capital: Havana

Other Cities: Santiago de Cuba, Camagüey, Santa Clara, Holguin, Guantanamo, Matanzas, Pinar del Rio.

Population: 11 million

Official Language: Spanish

Life Expectancy: 77 years

Workforce: 4.7 million.

GDP Per Capita: US\$3 300.

Currencies: Convertible pesos, Cuban Peso.

Exchange Rate: US \$1 = 0.90 Convertible Peso.

Geography: Cuba is located 90 miles south of Florida. Its geographic position is 21 °30N, 80 °00W. The island lies east of the Yucatan Peninsula and in one of the busiest shipping lanes for ships leaving the Panama Canal for the ports in North America and Europe.

With a land space of 4 420 square miles (110 860 square kilometers), Cuba is the largest island in the Caribbean. It is for the most part flat with gently rolling hills and wide fertile plains. The Sierra Mountain range reaches a height of 6 500 feet.

This former Spanish ruled island attained its independence in 1898.

Population: With a population of over 11 million people, Cuba is one of the most populous islands of the Caribbean. In terms of ethnicity, about 51 percent of the Cuban population is mulatto, 37 percent is white, 11 percent black and one percent Chinese.

At least 70 percent of the population lives in urban areas and the other 30 percent is located in the rural areas of the country. The official language is Spanish.

Education: Considered one of the key successes of the Cuban Revolution, Cuba prides itself on its attainment in this field. The Government spends enormous sums of money on education and the results have been significant. Education is compulsory and free for children aged six years to 14 years. Higher education, including university education, is tied to the country's economic and social agenda. It is based on technology, agriculture, tourism, medicine, research, and teacher training. At 97 percent, Cuba has one of the highest literacy rate in the Western Hemisphere. Several Caribbean students are presently enrolled at Cuban universities.

Health: Like Education, the Cuban Government allocates enormous resources annually to the health sector. This area of the Cuban economy is another success of the Revolution. There are approximately 300 hospitals, more than 16 000 alternate medical care institutions, close to 100 000 beds, 100

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000 doctors and a similar number of nurses. Social welfare benefits are provided for all categories of illnesses, disability and unemployment. Cuban trained doctors are presently working in a number of countries in the Caribbean, and expertise is provided in a number of areas. Life expectancy in Cuba is 77 years.

Climate: The climate in Cuba is similar to that of the Eastern Caribbean islands. The rainy season is from May to October. The island lies in the path of hurricanes and during the rainy season especially from June, the island is subjected to hurricane activity. The dry season is from November to April.

Religion: The majority of Cubans are Catholic. There is in Cuba an umbrella church body, the Cuban Council of Churches which embraces 22 denominations including Presbyterians, Episcopalians and Methodists. However, another 31 officially recognized denominations include Jehovah Witnesses and the small Jewish Community, are not members of the CCC.

Political System: Cuba is a Communist country. That system was installed following the 1959 Revolution which brought Dr. Fidel Castro Ruz to power. He has ruled Cuba since then, until he became ill in 2006. The country is a one party state with the Cuban Communist Party being the only one of significance. The country is divided into 14 provinces, including the City of Havana and one special municipality, Isle of Youth.

Cuba has had a tempestuous relationship with the United States. The USA has

imposed an embargo which not only prevents Americans from trading and travelling to the island, but frowns on countries which have been doing so. From time to time the United States had tightened the embargo and has gone so far by implementing what is known as the Helms Burton Act which threatens to sanction countries doing business with Cuba.

Airports: The country has 11 airports. The Jose Marti International Airport in Havana is the main one. Others with international air links are located at Camaguey, Ciego de Avila, Cienfuegos, Matanzas, Santiago de Cuba and Varadero.

Air services come mainly from Europe, Canada, Central and South America, Mexico and from the Caribbean via Jamaica.

Among the airlines servicing Cuba are Iberia, Air Jamaica, Air Canada, Virgin Atlantic, Aeroflot, Lufthansa, Martinair, ALM-KLM and Cubana. Some smaller private airlines operate regular services into the country. Cubana also operates internal flights in Cuba.

Telecommunications:

Telecommunications are not as developed. Telephone line density is low at 10 per 100 inhabitants. The country has under 900 000 telephone subscribers, or 7.50 per 100 inhabitants, based on information from the International Telecommunications Union.

However, upgrades are taking place. An Italian firm has completed a national fibre-optic system to enhance both tele-density and coverage.

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Weights and Measures: According to the Cuba Chamber of Commerce, decimal metric system for Weights and measure is used in the country. Liquids are measured in litres.

Electric currents: The most widely used is the single phase 110/60 hertz. In hotels there is usually the 220v connection. Points must be flat.

Public Holidays in Cuba

January 1	Liberation Day
January 2	Victory of the Armed Forces
May 1	International Workers Day
July 25	Eve of revolution Day
July 26	Anniversary of the Moncada Barracks Attack Day
July 27	Revolution Day
October 10	Commencement of Wars of Independence
December 10	Independence Day
December 25	Christmas Day

2. THE ECONOMY

2.1 Structure of the Cuban Economy

2.1.1 Tourism

Tourism is the major sector in the Cuban economy. This came about after the country was forced to restructure its economy following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the dismantling of Communism both of which impacted negatively on the economy. Previously dominated by sugar, the economy was opened up to foreign investment. Among the investors were a number of hotel companies which entered joint venture arrangements with the Government to construct hotels. Today Cuba welcomes in excess of two million visitors and tourism accounts for over 60 percent of Gross Domestic Product. The majority of visitors to the island originate from Canada, followed Mexico, Europe (mainly Spain), Latin America and the Caribbean.

2.1.2 Agriculture

This sector was the mainstay of the economy for over 30 years following the Cuban revolution of 1959. The principal agricultural activity was sugar production as Cuba had a guaranteed market in Eastern Europe for sugar, the main export outlet for the commodity. However, with the loss of Eastern Europe following the political changes which resulted in those countries attaining their independence from the Soviet Union, the industry experienced declines. Although production is lower,

Cuba is still a major producer of sugar, and it exports the commodity to some markets in Europe and to China. It is involved in a deal with Venezuela where Cuban sugar is exchanged for oil from that country. Nonetheless, the Cuban government is looking to attract foreign investment in the sugar industry in an attempt to lift production.

2.1.3 Nickel

Production is on the increase. Along with tourism, nickel output has boost economic growth to around 11 percent and 12 percent respectively in 2005 and in 2006. Venezuela and China have invested heavily in this segment of the Cuban economy and Cuba is now the world's fifth largest producer of nickel and cobalt.

2.1.4 Manufacturing

This is another segment of the Cuban economy which has contributed to the economic recovery following the difficult years of the early 1990s. The production of food and beverage, chemicals, cement, tobacco, clothing and textiles, and pharmaceuticals, are some of the principal goods manufactured by the Caribbean island. The country has also been exporting these items to markets in Europe, Canada, Latin America and China.

2.1.5 Construction

Construction activity in Cuba continues to be robust, according to the 2006 Economic Report as outlined by the Government. Foreign investment in the tourism sector has meant a wave of new hotel construction to boost the island's hotel room stock. In early 2007 the

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Cuban Government revealed plans for improvements to the country's airport infrastructure that would benefit the tourism industry. With capital inflows from China and Venezuela, the Cuban government has also undertaken a major programme to build between 250 000 to 300 000 houses as part of the housing development programme in the country. This activity which is expected to last three years (2005 – 2007) will add more buoyancy to construction activity whose contribution to GDP is around seven percent.

2.1.6 Oil

The oil industry in Cuba is expanding. Previously, Cuba had received its oil supplies from the then Soviet Union at concessionary prices. However, this was subsequently suspended in the early 1990s when the Soviet Union was disintegrated.

This had disastrous effects on the Caribbean island. With energy shortages, electricity was rationed, industrial output declined, public transportation was disrupted and there constant blackouts in the country. The Government subsequently looked for ways to stimulate the oil industry by inviting foreign investment in the sector. This has paid dividends While Venezuela is now the main supplier, the domestic industry is presently supplying 20 percent of local requirements.

2.1.7 Pharmaceutical

The Pharmaceutical industry in Cuba continues to make strides. Biotechnology and indigenous technologies are the main areas driving this area of the Cuban economy.

Estimates suggest that while the industry saves the country in excess of US\$60 million in imports annually, it also maximizes earnings through the export of medicines and prescription drugs to about 30 countries, including some in Latin America. Research is also taking place to produce new pharmaceuticals products for the export market.

Table 1. Sectoral Contribution to GDP in 2006

Sector	%
Tourism	67
Manufacturing	15
Construction	7
Agriculture and Fisheries	5
Mining	1.5

2.1.8 Banking

The Central Bank of Cuba is at the apex of the banking system in the country. First established in 1948 as the National Bank of Cuba, this institution was reorganized on at least four occasions, the last being in 1997 when it became the Central Bank. Its President is a member of the Council of Ministers of Cuba.

The financial system is made up of eight commercial banks, an investment bank, and non-bank financial institutions. The Havana Investment Bank is registered in London. There are no stock exchanges.

The Cuban Central Bank performs traditional central banking operations – issuing currencies, managing the financial system and the economy, specifying monetary policy, and acting as lender of last resort. Because of the American economic embargo the Central

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Bank has been very vigilant in maintaining the stability of the Cuban currency to ensure there are no economic shocks.

2.1.9 Exchange Rate

Cuba has two currencies in circulation: the Cuban Peso (CUP) and the convertible Peso. In April 2005 the official exchange rate was adjusted from US\$1 per CUP to US\$1.08 to CUP, both for individuals and enterprises. Cuba levies a 10 percent charge on each conversion of US dollars to CUP.

Cuban peso is used by government wage earners for subsidized goods and services, while the convertible peso is used for the purchase of consumer goods not available in peso stores or in the government ration. The Cuban peso is tied to several major foreign currencies, including the Euro, initially making for an eight percent revaluation.

2.2 Recent Economic Performance

2.2.1 Economic Indicators (2006)

National currency: Peso. Exchange rate US\$1 = 0.93 peso

Table 2 Balance of Payments

Balance of Payment	
Gross Domestic Product	36.2 billion
Exports	2.0 billion
Imports	7.5 billion
GDP per capita	3300 hundred
Inflation Rate	5.0 %

2.2.1 Prices and Income

Consumer prices as measured by the Retail price Index have been fluctuating in Cuba. From seven percent in 2003, the inflation rate declined in the two following years, before increasing in 2006. However, prices are projected to moderate in 2007 to about five percent. Inflation in Cuba is determined by the price fluctuation in both the market of the Cuban Peso and the official market of convertible pesos.

Table 3. Consumer Price Variation

	%
2003	7.1
2004	4.1
2005	3.1
2006	7.0
2007	5.0

2.2.2 Employment

The Cuban Labour Market displays certain characteristics. Of a population of 11 million people, the Cuban workforce is estimated at around six million. Labour costs are low when compared to other hemispheric countries. In 2003 the International Labour Organization (ILO) estimated Cubans were earning at least 234 pesos a month. However, wages of public sector employees and those with university degrees were increased in 2005, as were retirement and social pensions, and the minimum wages.

The point must be made though that Cuban workers receive free health care and education from the Government, and pay no more than 10 percent of their

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incomes for housing. Furthermore, all Cubans are entitled to a subsidized monthly food rations.

Another characteristic is that the Cuban labour force is well educated thereby creating a pool of trained workers for the market.

In addition, under a 1993 Labour Law, the Cuban government adopted a policy of distributing employment by industry and occupation. This policy by the Government means that foreign firms operating in the country are required to hire their labour through a state agency. One drawback from this system is that it limits the freedom of firms to choose their own workers.

Table 4 2006 Labour Force by Economic Sector

Sector	%
Agriculture	20
Industry	19.4
Services	60
Total Unemployment	1.9

2.3 Economic Outlook

The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) anticipates that Cuba's economic future will be shaped by the successor to Fidel Castro. The President who is still recuperating from an illness he suffered in 2006 has shaped Cuba over the last 47 years. His brother Raul Castro is acting as President.

However, analysts suggest that a post Fidel Castro Cuba will most likely make up with the United States. Several American businessmen have been

calling on their Government to end the economic embargo on Cuba, given that European, Asian, and Latin American and Caribbean firms and individuals, are doing business with Cuba.

The EIU said that the Cuban Central Bank will maintain fiscal and monetary discipline although liberalization will slow GDP growth. However, it expects that investments will drive overall growth, supported by rising household operations; infrastructure and manufacturing which it is anticipated will expand, along with some recovery in agriculture. The current account will show a small deficit.

Table 5 Economic Outlook

	2006	2007	2008
Real GDP Growth (%)	11.1	7.10	5.7
Consumer Price Inflation	6.7	3.6	4.1
Budget Balance (% of GDP)	-3.8	-3.2	-2.4
Exchange Rate (US \$: Euro)	.93	.93	.90

Source:EIU

2.4 Overview of Trade

2.4.1 Exports

Cuba has intensified its exports of goods and services.

Cuba's main exports are services (mainly tourism), sugar, tobacco, nickel, medical products, citrus fruits and coffee. Exports totaled US\$2.5 Billion in 2005, and US\$2.8 Billion the following year. Main export markets are the Netherlands, Canada, Venezuela, Spain, China, Russia and France. The country exports as well to Latin America and the Caribbean

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2.1.4 Imports

Petroleum and food account for the majority of imports into Cuba. They were estimated at US\$2 Billion in 2002. However, by the end of 2006 the value of both items imported into Cuba was US\$4 Billion. The main imported food items include corn, rice, and beans. Petroleum, machinery and chemicals also account for a fair share of imports to the island. Main suppliers are Venezuela, China, Spain, USA, Canada, Brazil, Germany, Italy and Mexico. Imports are handled by Alimport, a state agency.

approximately EC\$48 billion, a trade surplus in excess of EC\$130 billion.

Table 6 Cuba's 2006 Energy Imports

PRODUCT	VOLUM E	UNIT VALUE (US\$)	TOTAL VALUE (\$)
LPG	790 225	101.38	79 812 000
Gasolene	281 780	182.58	51 289 000
Jet Kero	1 401 965	182.58	269 184 000
Diesel	7 638 355	180.82	1 383 000 000
Fuel Oil	4 706 310	106.34	498 836 000
Crude Oil	19 423 110	57.37	1 107 115 000
TOTAL MARKET VALUE			3 389 227 000

Source: 2006 Oficina Nacional de Estadísticas de Cuba.

2.5 Cuba's Trade with CARICOM

In 2005, Cuba's domestic exports to CARICOM were in excess of EC\$178 billion, while imports were

3. GENERAL MARKETING FACTORS

3.1 Distribution and Sales Channels

Over last decade or so the Cuban Government has been pursuing policies to improve the import and distribution networks in the country. Retail operations are run by agencies set up as corporations by the government, by foreign corporations (in partnership with the Government) or by individuals under strict licensing and leasing agreement. Buying and distribution decisions are made at central headquarters, although store and department managers are having inputs into the process.

State-owned companies which are involved in the importation of goods are not permitted to advertise products and services. There are showrooms and warehouses located in specific places in the country.

3.1.1 Wholesale Food Distribution

The Cuban Government attaches considerable importance to the food distribution network system in the country. As such it has undertaken a major overhaul of the system by strengthening wholesale and retail and storage capacity and refrigerated facilities. It has taken control of the system.

3.1.2 Retail Food Distribution

State agencies have been established to retail food. Part of the reorganization process was linking state farms to cooperatives in the province of Havana and to produce markets. Apart from state

bodies, there are some small private farmers who retail food in Cuba. Some of these are based in the underground economy.

3.2 Use of Agents and Distributors

Goods can be imported into Cuba only by state entities and by joint venture operations holding permits for the specific goods in question. While agents and intermediaries handle goods on consignment for licensed importers, they cannot import on their own accord and neither can they conduct distribution operations. Joint ventures with foreign participation will generally obtain their import permits through their Cuban partners. However, the right to import specific categories of products may be included in negotiations when seeking approval for the joint venture.

3.3 Payment Conditions

Foreign companies are expected to establish a substantial trade relationship with Cuba for at least three years before being allowed to set up a presence in the island. For this reason, consignment sales have been gaining in popularity. Goods can be shipped to Cuba under consignment provided that they are covered by a contract for sales of merchandise imported as consignment. Consignment contracts have to stipulate that the consignee holds title to the goods, which the consignee must sell on behalf of the consignor according title to the goods, which the consignee must sell on behalf of the consignor according to the terms set out in the contract. The consignee must pay for the goods at the time they are sold.

3.4 Transportation

A good network of roads, railroads and air and sea transportation are key features of Cuba's infrastructure. Several ports abound handling tons of export and import cargo. Cuba lies in a major shipping lane especially for ships leaving the Panama Canal and destined for North America and Europe.

However, again because of the American embargo ships destined for USA ports are not allowed to make calls at Cuban ports.

Apart from oil imports from Trinidad and Tobago, sea transport links with CARICOM are not as fully developed as with some other ports in Central America.

Nonetheless, Havana, the Cuban capital and the largest town in the country, accounts for just over half of all cargo vessels calling at the island. Other major ports are Mariel (Free Trade Zone), Matanzas, Nipe, Nuevitas and Santiago de Cuba.

4. MARKET ACCESS ISSUES

4.1 Customs Tariff

4.1.1 General Import Policy

Cuba has gradually opened up its economy to trade in the face of an economic embargo the United States has imposed on the island. The country is not part of the several hemispheric integration movements like the Caribbean Community, Central American Common Market, Latin American Integration Association and the Free Trade Area of the Americas. There are therefore strict rules which guide the country's import policy. To trade with Cuba exporters must have two licenses: a travel license and an exporting license.

Cuba's tariff regime is outlined in Decree Law 124 of 1990. Decree Law 162 of 1996 sets out the functions and operations of the Custom system. According to the World Bank, Cuba's weighted average tariff rate was 9.4 percent, up from 8.2 percent.

4.1.2 Import Permits

Goods can be imported into Cuba only by state entities and by joint venture operations holding permits for the specific goods in question.

While agents and intermediaries handle goods on consignment for licensed importers, they cannot import on their own accord and neither can they conduct distribution operations. Import permits are therefore required.

Joint ventures with foreign participation will generally obtain their import permits through their Cuban partners. But the right to import specific categories of products may be included in negotiations when seeking approval of the joint venture arrangement.

4.1.3 Taxation

Cuba has an income tax rate of 50 percent and a corporate tax rate of 35 percent. The corporate tax rate is levied on branches in the same way as other companies. The rate of the progressive income tax varies from 10 percent (for those earning less than US\$6 000) to 50 percent (for those earning more). While there is no value added tax in Cuba there is a tax on sales with the rate varying according to the nature of the products. The state has both land taxes and property transfer taxes.

Conversions between the US dollar and the Cuban convertible peso are subject to a 10 percent tax. The fiscal year runs from January 1, to December 31.

4.1.4 Import Duties

It should be noted that Cuba uses the nomenclature of the harmonized system up to eight digits. The simple average tariff on about 5 400 commodities was lowered from 11.5 percent to 10.4 percent for Most Favoured Nation (MFN) countries, according to the Ministry of Foreign Trade. The maximum MFN tariff is 30 percent. Cuba applies the MFN rate to goods originating in countries which have bilateral agreements. Non MFN general tariff averages 17.9 percent. Cuba is a member of the Latin American Integration Association and input

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classifications are based on the Harmonised Systems at the eight digit level.

4.1.5 Special Provisions

Entities with foreign partners may be granted duty free status for some or all of those products as part of their economic association or joint venture agreement.

Provision is there for negotiating other terms of these agreements. There are as well negotiations for duty drawback in circumstances including temporary importation for upgrading or re-exports and replacement of materials incorporated in exported products and chemicals that disappear during the production process and not incorporated in the formal product.

However, of note is the fact that these drawbacks are granted only when the circumstances are deemed to be in the national interest or for commercial viability in foreign markets.

4.1.6 Special Custom Procedures

An approved Cuban Custom Broker must handle all custom formalities. Some larger importers arrange to have staff trained and certified and pay a fee of US\$50 monthly to operate internal agencies.

Precise documentation and full compliance with all regulations is essential when exporting products to Cuba.

Care is urged because seemingly minor discrepancies can lead to confiscation of improperly documented imported goods.

Since labelling, sanitary and phytosanitary and product safety standard regulations are enforced at the border as a practical matter, the burden of compliance rests with all exporters.

4.2 Non-Tariff Barriers

4.2.1 Foreign Exchange Controls

There are no foreign exchange controls in Cuba. However; from time to time changes are made to the regulations. Effective November 8, 2004, the Cuban Government adjusted the laws relating to foreign exchange controls. Shops and other businesses are no longer allowed to accept US dollars. Also foreigners holding US dollars are required to pay a 10 percent fee for convertible pesos. Previously the convertible pesos were used interchangeably with US dollars. However, this is no longer the case.

4.3 Labelling and Marking Requirements

The National Standards Office in Cuba sets out strict guidelines for labelling all products exported into Cuba. These standards are similar to other countries' regulations. The following are the guidelines:

- Specific name of the product(s)
- Labels must be in Spanish
- Labels must contain ingredients of products
- The expiry date must be cited
- Net Content must be listed
- Price
- Quantity of units

In addition, all documents must be originals and translated in Spanish.

4.4 Laws on Patents, Trademarks and Copyright

4.4.1 Patents

In Cuba the regulations address the issue of three patents which have to be applied for. These are Patent of Invention, Patent of for a complement of Invention, and patent for industrial models. Cuba is a member of the World Intellectual Property Organization and has its own body the Cuban Office of Industrial Property.

The country also subscribes to a number of international conventions.

4.4.2 Trademarks

All Trademarks and brand names registered in Cuba are protected under Cuban Laws. Trademark registration with the Cuban Office of Trademarks and Patents is voluntary but it is highly recommended that exporters shipping products to Cuba make every effort to register their trademarks and brand names there.

4.4.3 Copyrights

Cuba is a signatory to many treaties and agreements, including the Berne Convention. Based on this factor the protection of copyrights and inventions is enshrined in Cuban laws. A very significant factor as well, is the fact that Cuba's economic policy involves pursuing sectors where research and product development must be heavily guarded against infringement.

Biotechnology, information services, pharmaceuticals and cultural industries are among the areas that would be vulnerable to infringements outside of the island. As Cuba adheres to copyrights rules it expects similar behaviour from other states.

4.5 Documentary Requirements

In shipping goods to Cuba exporters must have at least two copies of a bill of lading. Similarly, copies of the Airport Bill are also required if the goods are being sent by air. Other documentary requirements are Commercial Invoice and Packaging List. Full details about the origin of the goods, contents and weight must be identified on the documents.

5. INVESTMENT POLICY

With the exception of defense, public health care and education, all other sectors of the Cuban economy are opened to Foreign Direct Investment. Provision for FDI is made under the country's Foreign Investment Act of 1993 which outlines broad areas of investment promotion and incentives for foreign investors. The areas identified for FDI are tourism, manufacturing, nickel and mining, agriculture, information technology, pharmaceuticals, and telecommunication.

These areas where foreign investment is being invited are among a list outlined by the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Investment and Economic Cooperation and other official agencies of Government.

The aims of the policy are to diversify the economy, moving it away from being dominated by agriculture, and to earn foreign exchange. The country has signed Bilateral Investment Treaties with other countries to promote investment and to protect investors. There are no limits on repatriating profits by foreign investors and foreign investors are given protection and special safeguards. Financing is provided at concessionary rates and joint ventures are also pursued.

5.1 Export Processing Zones

Since 1997 Cuba has in place export processing zones. Decree Law 165 makes provision for the EPZs which are located on approximately 1 250 hectares of land. Considered the largest in the

Caribbean and even surpassing those of Panama, the Cuban EPZs are located in Havana, Cienfuegos, and in the Berroa Valley.

The genesis behind setting up EPZs is to attract foreign direct investment and to increase exports, cited a United Nations Discussion Paper authored by Larry Willmore. Through Decree Law 165, the Cuban authorities have granted attractive concessions for investors wishing to participate in the EPZs. Investors are allowed to retain full ownership of their operations which is different from other forms of investments are based on joint ventures with public enterprises. Investors with plants in the processing zones are exempted from Cuban income tax and taxes on labour utilization for a period of 12 years to be followed by a 50 percent exemption for another three years.

While EPZs are primarily designed to promote exports Cuba allows some plants limited sales to the domestic market.

Products that incorporate at least 50 percent Cuban value added are exempted from the payment of duty. No other country in the Caribbean Basin offers such incentives for EPZs sales to the domestic market.

5.2 Cuba – Caribbean Relations

In 2000 Cuba and CARICOM signed a Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement. The agreement which has since been ratified provides for the duty free entry in each other's markets of a list of approved goods. In the meantime, CARICOM countries have a list of items

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they believe hold good prospects in the Cuban market.

Table 7 CARICOM Products/Services Which Can Be Exported to Cuba

Aluminium	Plastic Articles
Bread	Processed Foods
Coffee	Putty
Condiments	Rum
Cut Flowers	Rum Cakes
Fish	Sauces
Fruits and Vegetables	Ships/Boats
Ice Cream	Tanks
Leather Goods	Tourism Services
Malta	Water Heating Systems

Source: Barbados Investment Development Corporation

CARICOM countries are undertaking business and trade missions to Cuba to secure trade and investment opportunities.

The Jamaican Hotel Chains, Super Clubs and Sandals have hotels in Cuba, while Trinidad and Tobago exports mainly oil and other energy based products to Cuba. In September 200t that country opened a Trade Center in Cuba to further solidify its commercial relations there. Barbados has mounted a trade mission to Cuba and has signed a double taxation agreement with the island.

6. CULTURAL PRACTICES

6.1 Business Customs

Government: 8.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.;
1.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. (Monday to
Friday); 8.30 a.m. to 12 noon
(alternative Saturdays)

National Bank: 8.30 a.m. to 12
noon; 1.30 p.m. to 3 p.m. (Monday to
Friday); 8.30 a.m. to 10.30 a.m.
(Saturday).

6.2 Entry Requirements

All travellers to Cuba must possess a valid passport, a return ticket and a visa or tourist visa. Tourist visas are issued by the ticketing airline or travel agents. In a worse case scenario they can usually be bought on the spot upon clearing Customs. Visas cost between CUC \$25 and CUC \$35, depending upon the issuing agent. They are good for up to 90 days, although Custom agents will sometimes issue them for 30 days. Other requirements are needed for the USA and other countries. For instance, CARICOM citizens travelling to Cuba do not require a visa for vacation trips. A tourist visa may be required. Business travelers need a Business Visa.

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APPENDIX

ADDRESSES

Government Regulating Agencies
Ministerio de Salud Publica
Call 23, No 201 entre M y N Vedado
Plazo Revolucion
Habana, Cuba CP 10400

Institute of Nutrition and Food Safety
Infanta No. 1158 entre Linas y Clavel
Centro de La Habana
Habana, Cuba CP 10300
Tel: 011 (537) 78-1429, 78-5919, 70-0183

National Standards Office
Calle E No.261 entre 11 y 13
Vedado – La Habana,
Tel: 011 (537) 30-0022, 30 0835, 30-0825.

Center for Investment Promotion of Cuba
Calle Ira Entre 22 y 24
Miramar
Cuidad de La Habana
Tel:537 702-3873.

Center for Export Promotion of Cuba
Vedado,
Cuidad de La Habana
Tel:537 55-0428/55 – 460

Ministry of Foreign Trade (MINCEX)
Infanta No. 16 esq.a 23
Vedado Cuidad de La Habana
Tel:537 – 54-3237/38.

Mariel Free Zone
Carretera de Quiebra Hacha
Vista del Mar
Peninsula de Langosta Mariel
Cuidad de La Habana
Tel:537-33-5924/063-98201.

MEDIA IN CUBA

Newspapers

- Adelanta
- Ahora
- Guerrillero
- Granma
- Juvenilud Rebelde
- Nueva Prensa Cubana
- Trabajadores
- Vanguardia

Radio

- Radio Rebelde
- Radio Reloj
- Radio Habana Cuba

News Agencies

- Agencia de Informacion Nacional
- Prensa Latina