China Delivers Second Solar Donation to Cuba

One of the most exciting solar systems with battery storage (Source: EmbChinaCuba/X)

Cuba has received new support to help cope with the energy crisis: Last Friday, China's ambassador to Havana, Hua Xin, presented a second batch of 5,000 solar systems as a donation. The systems are to be distributed across all 169 municipalities in the country and will supply solar power to remote households in rural areas as well as essential public services—including health centers, emergency rooms, daycare centers, children's homes, and bank branches.

More Powerful Systems

The new batch differs significantly in technical specifications from the first donation, which China delivered in November 2025. At that time, 5,000 systems were handed over, each with an output of 2 kilowatts (kW) and four modules of 630 watts each. The systems now delivered feature four modules of 710 watts each and an output of 3.6 kW—an 80 percent increase over the previous shipment. The storage capacity is 14.3 kilowatt-hours (kWh) per unit, which is roughly twice that of the previous systems.

According to the journal *pv magazine*, the total delivery corresponds to a distributed solar capacity of approximately 18 megawatts (MW) and a combined storage capacity of about 71.5 MWh.

The systems are designed to be off-grid and are intended to maintain the basic supply of electricity even during power grid outages. The Cuban electricity provider Unión Eléctrica has already installed the first shipment of 5,000 systems. Of these, 2,671 units were allocated to facilities classified as critical infrastructure in the municipalities, and another 2,329 to remote households—including some that previously had no electricity connection at all.

Six Blackouts Since January

Ambassador Hua Xin described the delivery as a “gift from the Chinese people” and explained that it was part of the Belt and Road Initiative as well as a gesture marking the upcoming 100th birthday of Fidel Castro. Beijing will continue to support Cuba on its path to energy sovereignty and work together toward a closer community with a shared future, Hua Xin said.

Deputy Prime Minister Pérez-Oliva thanked the Chinese government for its continued support in the energy sector and emphasized its particular importance given the difficult situation facing the power grid due to the ongoing U.S. energy blockade. If these were available daily, power outages would last only three hours instead of 20 or more.

Cuba is currently experiencing one of the most severe energy crises in its history: so far in 2026, there have been six nationwide blackouts. Since the beginning of the year, only one oil tanker has reached the island. Ships that Cuba had chartered on the world market were intercepted by the U.S. Coast Guard, which severely limits reserves for power generation via decentralized diesel generators. The result is daily power outages lasting 20 hours or more; most recently, the generation shortfall stood at 2,347 megawatts, well over half of the demand.

New Laws Aim to Boost Renewable Energy Expansion

Coinciding with the handover of the solar power plants, two regulations from the Cuban Ministry of Finance took effect, designed to promote the expansion of renewable energy.

Resolution 179/2026, published in the Official Gazette on August 7, 2026, amends Resolution 114/2026, which was issued in May. It establishes a uniform feed-in tariff of 90 Cuban pesos (CUP) per kWh—equivalent to about 11 euro cents—for electricity fed into the grid from renewable energy sources. The rate now applies regardless of whether the generator is a private household or a commercial entity, and regardless of the time of day. The new regulation explicitly covers all renewable sources, including biomass and wind energy.

Resolution 180/2026 expands the tax incentives for the use of renewable energy. The existing customs exemptions and tax incentives for photovoltaic systems and a wide range of other renewable energy equipment have been reaffirmed and extended. These include: PV systems and their components, solar thermal systems, solar pumps, small wind turbines, biogas plants, solar-powered lighting and air conditioning systems, charging stations for electric vehicles, and biomass processing facilities.

In addition, the resolution provides for a full tax deduction for charitable investments in the installation and maintenance of renewable energy systems, such as in schools or nursing homes, water infrastructure, street lighting, multifamiliar apartment buildings, or households with residents who rely on electric assistive devices. Furthermore, all goods in the renewable energy sector, both wholesale and retail, are exempt from sales tax for one year.

Self-employed individuals and small business owners who install solar systems for personal use or to feed electricity into the grid will, as before, be exempt from income tax for the entire payback period—up to eight years—in an amount equal to the investment value; the same applies to legal entities with regard to corporate income tax. (Cubaheute)