

## UN Unveils \$94 Million Emergency Plan



*The United Nations has launched an aid initiative for Cuba (Source: [UN Photo/Flickr/CC-2.0](#))*

In light of the worsening energy and supply crisis in Cuba, the United Nations has [presented](#) a \$94.1 million emergency plan. The goal is to maintain basic services for the country's most vulnerable people and "save lives," Francisco Pichón, the UN coordinator in Cuba, told reporters.

"If the current situation persists and the country's fuel reserves are depleted, we fear a rapid deterioration with the potential loss of human lives," said Pichón. However, the feasibility of the plan "obviously depends on solutions regarding fuel supply."

The UN is currently in talks with the U.S. government to facilitate fuel imports for humanitarian purposes. Pichón explained that the action plan, along with a model for tracking fuel consumption, would be proposed as tools "to reach an agreement." "All solutions are being considered, including cooperation with the private sector," the UN coordinator said.

The Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, described the health situation on the island as "deeply concerning." Health must be protected "at all costs" and must never be "at the mercy of geopolitics, energy blockades, and power outages," he wrote on social media.

According to Cuban authorities, approximately 100,000 surgical procedures had to be postponed. Hospitals were struggling to keep emergency rooms and intensive care units operational. Cancer patients and pregnant women nearing delivery were at risk due to the lack of power for medical equipment. The cold chain for vaccines could no longer be reliably maintained, and vaccination programs were being delayed.

“Cuba’s hospitals, clinics, and ambulances are needed now more than ever and must be supported to continue their life-saving work,” the WHO chief urged.

The Cuban population is suffering from power outages lasting in some cases more than 20 hours a day. Since the fall of 2024, there have been seven nationwide blackouts, two of them in the past week alone. The causes are the deterioration of power plants and an acute fuel shortage. On February 6, President Díaz-Canel ordered rationing measures to conserve fuel.

The current crisis arose after U.S. President Donald Trump imposed a de facto oil embargo on Cuba following the abduction of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro in January and threatened to impose tariffs on countries supplying Havana with petroleum.

Washington had minimally eased the sanctions last month and allowed the sale of petroleum to Cuba’s private sector. However, the quantities arriving in this manner are small. Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel stated that talks with Washington are “in an initial phase,” while the U.S. continues to divert ships and intercept them with the help of the Coast Guard. The Cuban government also emphasizes that the country is not subject to international sanctions and has the right to procure oil on the world market.

The UN emergency plan, which represents an expansion of relief efforts following Hurricane Melissa in October, focuses on six areas: logistics, health, water and sanitation, food security, shelter and protection, and education. It is intended to reach two million people in 63 municipalities and eight provinces. So far, only 27 percent of the funding has been secured. ([Cubaheute](#))