

# CUBA IN TRANSITION

Volume 22

Papers and Proceedings of the

Twenty-Second Annual Meeting of the  
Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy (ASCE)

Miami, Florida  
August 2–4, 2012

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Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy,  
P.O. Box 28267  
Washington, DC 20038-8267

Email: [asce@ascecuba.org](mailto:asce@ascecuba.org)

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## PREFACE

This 22<sup>nd</sup> Volume of *Cuba in Transition* contains the Proceedings of the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy (ASCE), held on August 2–4, 2012 at the Hilton Downtown Hotel in Miami, Florida.

The conference theme, “Where Is Cuba Going?,” was intended as a challenge to conference participants to reflect on the goals of the various economic reform measures enacted on the island since 2008, identify their consequences (both intended and unintended), and evaluate their success. We were quite prescient with the title this year, given that the *New York Times Magazine* ran a cover story under the same headline just a few weeks after our meeting. Academic scholars, policy makers, and professionals from the United States, Cuba, Canada, Venezuela, and other countries presented their research in an array of areas, from the impact of the changes in Cuba to the global financial crisis, legal issues, agriculture, tourism, foreign relations, and the Internet and emerging uses of social media on the island.

In addition to our normally distinguished group of conference attendees, this year’s conference benefited from the participation of a diverse group of old friends and relative new-comers including, Jorge Domínguez (Harvard University), Richard Feinberg (University of California, San Diego), Haroldo Dilla (University of Santo Domingo), Juan Antonio Blanco (Miami Dade College), Julia Sagebien (Dalhousie University), Domingo Amuchástegui (former member of the Cuban Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Phillip Peters (Lexington Institute), Dawn Gable (George Washington University), Clara Domínguez (Voice of America), Mike González (Heritage Foundation) and Vegard Bye (Norwegian Institute of International Affairs).

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the membership of ASCE, I would like to thank Jorge Pérez-López for his tireless dedication to our organization, most visible in putting together the conference and editing this volume, this year with the able assistance of Gary Maybarduk and Joseph Scarpaci. I would also like to recognize both the Christopher Reynolds Foundation and the Cuba Study Group for their generous support of our conference, which allowed us to sponsor the participation of two Cuban scholars, Yociel Marrero, of the Fundación Antonio Núñez Jiménez, and Orlando Márquez, editor of the Catholic Church publication *Palabra Nueva*. Their financial support also allowed us to host other participants from Cuba via live teleconference, including the renown blogger Yoani Sánchez and the eminent independent journalist Reinaldo Escobar. While the invited economists from the island, Oscar Espinosa Chepe, Pavel Vidal Alejandro, Armando Nova González and Omar Everleny Pérez, among others were not able to attend, we hope to continue these dialogues and collaborations in the future with an ever broader array of Cuban scholars, economists, writers, and members of civil society.

I would like to thank Jorge Domínguez in particular for delivering the conference’s original and enlightening Ernesto Betancourt keynote address, “Can Cuban Leaders Govern?,” which focused on the surprising weakening of the state under Raúl Castro evidenced by his inability to have new economic policies and directives im-

plemented in a disciplined and timely manner by lower-level bureaucrats. I would also like to recognize this year's student participants and Student Prize winners, Jesse Horst and Kelly Urban, both of the University of Pittsburgh, and Antonio Díaz, Jhon Cores, Alex Arias, William Rodriguez, and Miguel Morales, all of the University of Florida. Being a former student winner myself in 2002, I want to thank them for taking the plunge into ASCE and look forward to their continuing participation.

Ted A. Henken  
President