

Prayer Diary: Cuba

12-18 February 2023



In September, the government held a popular referendum on a new Family Code, which has the potential to violate the fundamental freedoms of all citizens. Although turnout was not as high as in previous referendums, following government intimidation tactics targeting those critical of the proposed law, a majority voted in favour.

Worryingly, the code allows for children to be removed by the authorities if the government decides that the parents have failed to fulfil responsibilities, including teaching their children to respect the authorities and the country's 'symbols'. This essentially gives the Cuban Communist Party another very effective way of silencing critical voices.

The authorities pressured people not to speak negatively about the problematic aspects of the Family Code in the run up to the referendum, and to publicly support the vote in favour; the authorities made threats such as imprisonment and the removal of their children if they disobeyed. Those summoned included religious leaders and people active on social media who speak out about issues of justice. Throughout this year we noted an increase in cases involving religious leaders being directly threatened with the loss of their children if they did not, for example, go into exile or shut down their church.

Find out more at csw.org.uk/cuba

At a time when many of us will be thinking about our loved ones, let's remember in prayer the many Cubans for whom the Family Code poses a very real threat. Use Psalm 68 to inspire your prayers:

- For those who are fearful of being unfairly targeted by the Family Code, such as religious leaders and human rights defenders.
- For wisdom and safe avenues for Cubans to speak the truth about the injustice they're experiencing.
- For those who are already separated from their loved ones because of their religion or belief. For example, children with a parent in prison on false charges, or families that have been separated after being forced into exile.

***A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.
God sets the lonely in families, he leads out the prisoners with singing;
but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land.***

(Psalm 68:5-6)