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## A General Statement from AAAI

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To: General Public

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### Post RELEASE

**‘We Came, We Saw, We Joined! – VIVA LA Cuba!’**



**The African Awareness Association 's Delegation Shows Solidarity in Guantanamo, July 23,2017**

The African Awareness Association' Black History Educational & Cultural Travel Challenge's delegates had an uneventful re-entry upon their recently return to the USA, The AAA took their annual travel challenge to Cuba with a delegation of 15 Africans in America from various cities in the USA from July 22 to 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017. We spent nine days in Cuba, visiting the cities of Santiago de Cuba, Guantanamo and Havana.

We were in Santiago de Cuba for the Carnival of Santiago; the largest festival in Cuba. Our exchanges and discussion with everyday Cubans in this festive

atmosphere were informative and instructive. Along with visits with various leaders and mass organizational representatives, a very memorable and special moment, while in Santiago, was the visit to the Santa Ifigenia Cemetery where we gave respect to many of Cuba's historic freedom fighters and heroes, such as Jose Marti, Mother of Antonio Macheo to Comandante Fidel Castro and others.

Then we traveled to Guantanamo and its regional area of Baracoa (proximity to US occupied land of a naval base site), infamous for being the site of the US Prison – Torture Camp. There we learned of the over 114 years of US occupation of 45 sq. miles of Cuban territory. But even more, we learned who the base created the largest community of prostitution in Cuba and how it exploits and terrorizes the citizens of Guantanamo. This territory must be returned to the sovereign country of Cuba. Guantanamo has the dubious distinction of being the most African populated province in Cuba; populated by immigrant workers from other Caribbean Islands who migrated to Cuba to work in the sugar cane fields.

We also saw/joined in the July 26<sup>th</sup> Celebration of the anniversary of the 1953 attack on the Moncada barracks while in Havana. Visits were made to museums, tours of historic sites in Havana and meetings with community leaders and had an insightful discussion with one Cuba's Afro-Cuban intellectual on the question of Race in Cuba, our brother Esteban Morales Dominguez...

Not knowing the full implication of President Trump rolling back the travel agreements made by his predecessor Barak Obama, our delegation was prepared for the unexpected on our arrival back to the US.

We would like to thank I-CAP, FMC, CTC, UJC, CDR UNEAC, CPP Youth League and other representatives of the various cities for the wonderful acts of solidarity and warmth, its presentations on the history of its cities realities' and concerns in Cuba and the world. Culturally, we would like to thank such institutions, groups and artists such as, Ivan Acosta; Y De Cuba Somos, Ballet Folklorico, the Casa del Changul, the Show Bararrumba, and Carnival Museum, Jazz Show on Fox and the Crow and the Municipality of Regla. We thank them for helping to make this tour an educational and enlighten one of expressed friendship...

We seek an invitation to the African Community in the U.S. to come to your community to share our experiences and to extend a call for you to join us and the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 'Million Woman March/Movement' to join our Educational & Unity Tour to Cuba from December 27, 2017 – January 3, 2018. Please visit our site at: [www.aaa-cubatours.com](http://www.aaa-cubatours.com) or contact [nationalmwm@aol.com](mailto:nationalmwm@aol.com).