

Meet the Ambassador – Cuba

HE Mrs Tanieris Dieguez la O, Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba
in conversation with Professor Adrian Hearn

Tuesday 1 August: 5pm for 5.30-6.30pm AEST at Dyason House, 124 Jolimont Road, East Melbourne

After the five-decade rule of Fidel Castro and his brother Raúl, Miguel Diaz-Canel has since served as President of Cuba, being elected for a second term in April this year. His election platform was predicated on the fostering of the development of the private sector in Cuba in a globalising world.



The economic consequences of the US blockade in force since the 1960s was compounded by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in a recession and significant economic hardship. Although Cuba faces a range of socio-economic crises, the pharmaceutical industry is highly developed and considered to be leading in the South American region. Cuba was also the first Latin American nation to independently develop a COVID-19 vaccine, and headed an effort to send thousands of doctors to low-income African and South American countries to inoculate the local populations.

Cuba has initiated a myriad of resolutions to the United Nations General Assembly calling to condemn the ongoing US blockade of the island. Australia has consistently supported this call and is a strong partner with Cuba in multilateral fora. The two nations have partnered on projects in the Indo-Pacific, including jointly supporting the integration of Cuban-trained doctors into Pacific Island countries, where mortality rates have been significantly reduced.

How will Cuba's economy recover post-COVID after the blow the tourism industry was dealt? How does it plan to manage the economic crises it now faces? Fifteen years after Cuba's establishment of an embassy in Australia, what opportunities now exist for Australia-Cuba development cooperation and trade in agriculture, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals?

For the next instalment of our *Meet the Ambassador* series, AIIA Victoria invites you to join Cuban Ambassador Tanieris Dieguez la O to discuss the bilateral relationship and future opportunities. The Ambassador will be interviewed by [Professor Adrian Hearn](#) (Melbourne University), who has lived in Cuba and is currently managing a DFAT-funded project on medicinal plants in Havana.



HE Mrs Tanieris Dieguez la O took up her post as Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba to Australia in 2023. Having started her career as an Assistant law professor at the University of Havana Law School and as a Prosecutor in the Provincial District Attorney's Office in Matanzas province, she joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Division for Legal Affairs in 2009. She served as Cuba's representative to the UN Sixth Committee and legal advisor to Cuba's Permanent Mission to the UN, before going on to head the General Division of Multilateral Affairs and International Law.

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Professor Adrian Hearn is a researcher in Latin American Studies at the University of Melbourne. Having lived in the United States for eleven years, Latin America for four years, and China for one year, his research explores questions about the interaction of global processes with local experiences. His projects are funded by the Australian Research Council (ARC), the Open Society Foundations, the São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP), the Council on Australia-Latin America Relations (COALAR), the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, DFAT, and others. As well as his academic work, Adrian directs the community arts organisation [Suns of Mercury](#).

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