



# Healthcare without Borders: Understanding Cuban Medical Internationalism (Contemporary Cuba)

*John M. Kirk*

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“Kirk’s invaluable study reveals to us, for the first time, the range and character of Cuba’s remarkable achievements, which should be an inspiration and a model for those with far greater advantages.”—Noam Chomsky, author of *Manufacturing Consent*

“Invaluable. Provides ample, detailed, and clear evidence of the whole evolution of medical internationalism within Cuban foreign and social policy, going well beyond the headlines to trace that evolution carefully and honestly.”—Antoni Kapcia, coeditor of *The Changing Dynamic of Cuban Civil Society*

“Offers a textured and nuanced assessment of a complex politico-cultural phenomenon.”—Louis A. Pérez, author of *The Structure of Cuban History: Meanings and Purpose of the Past*

Cuba has more medical personnel serving abroad—over 50,000 in 66 countries—than all of the G-7 countries combined, and also more than the World Health Organization. For over five decades, the island nation has been a leading force in the developing world, providing humanitarian aid (or “cooperation,” as Cuba’s government prefers) and initiating programs for preventative care and medical training.

In *Healthcare without Borders*, John Kirk examines the role of Cuban medical teams in disaster relief, biotechnology joint ventures, and in the Latin American School of Medicine—the largest medical faculty in the world. He looks at their responses to various crises worldwide, including the 1960 earthquake in Chile, the Chernobyl disaster in the Ukraine, the devastating 2010 earthquake in Haiti and the subsequent cholera outbreak, and the 2014 Ebola epidemic in West Africa.

Kirk issues an informative and enlightening corrective for what he describes as the tendency of the industrialized world’s media to ignore or underreport this medical aid phenomenon. In the process, Kirk explores the philosophical underpinnings of human rights and access to medical care at the core of Cuba’s medical internationalism programs and partnerships.

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