

CUBA IN TRANSITION

Volume 16

Papers and Proceedings of the

Sixteenth Annual Meeting
of the

Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy (ASCE)

Miami, Florida
August 3–5, 2006

© 2006 by the Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy (ASCE)

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without the written permission of the Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy (ASCE). Printed and bound in the United States of America.

(ISBN 0-9729551-6-X)

Cuba in Transition volumes may be purchased from:

Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy,
P.O. Box 28267
Washington, DC
20038-8267
Email: publications@ascecuba.org or armando.linde@verizon.net

Information on availability of volumes and book order forms are available at

Email: publications@ascecuba.org or armando.linde@verizon.net

PREFACE

This volume of *Cuba in Transition* is a collection of the proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy, held in Miami, Florida on August 3-5, 2006, at the Wolfson Campus of Miami Dade College. More than sixty scholars and experts on transition issues participated in the conference. The papers presented and the panel discussions covered a wide array of topics; namely, economy and finance, energy, agriculture, law, governance, military and demographic issues, and socioeconomic and cultural aspects of Cuban society. The dispassionate tone of the discussions and the civility with which all views were heard and debated—a hallmark of ASCE's annual meetings over the years—are testimony to the commitment of its members to the serious study of the Cuban economy and society.

In light of recent events, it is all the more important to redouble these efforts to ensure that when the inevitable change to a market economy gets underway, lessons from other transition experiences are kept fresh in order to emulate good policies while avoiding costly mistakes. With a clean and light-handed government in a political setting where ideas can be freely discussed, Cuban creativity and entrepreneurship will pave the way for a short transition to a rising economy and a happier community.

In this connection, the Saturday session of the ASCE conference served as a forum for a presentation by a group of experts on transition economies and emerging market issues of a set of recommendations on macro-economic and sectoral policies to help launch a process of transforming Cuba into a market economy in the context of a free society. The presentation was videotaped, and a copy in DVD is being provided to ASCE members with this volume. This project was made possible by the generous financial support of the newly-formed Development Research Corporation and its founder, Jorge Sanguinety.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the membership of ASCE, I would like to express our gratitude to the Miami Dade College for providing its facilities and effective logistical arrangements for the conference. ASCE's activities, including the publication of this volume of *Cuba in Transition*, are made possible by the generous support of the donors and benefactors cited in this volume. To them, our heartfelt thanks. I wish to thank the Institute for Cuban and Cuban American Studies of the University of Miami for acting as the Secretariat of the conference, and co-editing this volume. Jorge Pérez-López, once again, virtually single-handedly organized the program of the conference. We are deeply indebted to him for his dedication and inspiration.

Apart from not being able to freely express their views, the living conditions of our friends and colleagues among Cuba's dissidents is profoundly troubling. We ask that they be allowed to live in dignity and practice their profession without interference or retribution. On that hope, we wish to dedicate this book to a brave woman, Marta Beatriz Roque Cabello.

Armando Linde
President

