

CUBA IN TRANSITION

Volume 17

Papers and Proceedings of the
Seventeenth Annual Meeting
of the
Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy (ASCE)

Miami, Florida
August 2–4, 2007

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PREFACE

This 17th Volume of Cuba in Transition publishes the Proceedings of the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy (ASCE), held on August 2-4, 2007 at the Radisson Miami Hotel Miami, Florida. Scholars and experts on a wide array of transition issues participated and presented papers on subjects as diverse as infrastructure, labor, economy and finance, demographics, legal concerns, and socioeconomic and cultural aspects of Cuba and Cuban society. Our focus this year was on lessons learned from other countries in transition.

In addition to the papers presented and the spirited, but always respectful discussions, the annual meeting was privileged to hear Carlos Alberto Montaner's very moving keynote address and Horacio Aguirre's eloquent presentation on the importance of a free press in promoting good governance and democratic freedoms.

The "Havana and its Landscapes" presentation, describing the sad condition of Havana's infrastructure and the resources needed to restore the city to its pre-revolutionary eminence, was another of ASCE's efforts to expand research and knowledge on Cuba beyond the economic and social sciences.

We again thank the University of Miami's Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies for acting as the secretariat of the conference.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the membership of ASCE, I want to thank Jorge Pérez-López for his tireless dedication to organizing the program of the conference and to him and to Joseph L. Scarpaci for editing this volume.

ASCE's most important contributions remain the professionalism it brings to the analysis of developments in Cuba, and the forum it provides for dispassionate dialogue and study. This, and the fact that our members care deeply about Cuba, gives ASCE a valuable perspective. We hope you will find that these Proceedings contribute to the Association's goal of expanding the dialogue on Cuban affairs to promote and facilitate a smoother transition in the island to an efficient market economy, in the context of a free and humane society with opportunities for a better life for all.

Armando Linde
President

