



## A CRISIS WITH NO WAY OUT AND CITIZEN PROTESTS

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Since the night of Wednesday, May 13, several neighborhoods and municipalities in Havana have seen pot-banging protests, spontaneous gatherings, partial street blockades, and the burning of garbage containers as a direct response to the extreme prolongation of power outages. Several reports located the protests in areas such as Playa, Marianao, Guanabacoa, Lawton, Luyanó, San Miguel del Padrón, Old Havana, Boyeros, Cotorro, Cojímar, Diez de Octubre, and El Vedado, in a context in which numerous households have accumulated more than 48 hours without continuous electricity service or have endured interruptions exceeding 20 hours per day.

Although smaller and dispersed, these demonstrations have been taking place steadily in different parts of the country. They have been composed mainly of neighbors and families residing in the most affected communities, without distinction of gender or age. The main demand has been secure access to electricity, water, and food: the minimum conditions needed to sustain everyday life. After months in which it has become almost impossible to cook, preserve food, pump water, properly charge electronic devices, or maintain basic care routines, neighborhood expressions of social exhaustion are becoming increasingly visible and are directed mostly at municipal headquarters of the PCC.

Food Monitor Program considers it urgent to humanize these actions and to reject any criminalization based on claims of political manipulation that the Cuban government may issue. These are millions of families whose routines are shaped around the few hours of electricity available each day. According to the observatory's inquiries, it is women, mothers, and grandmothers who wake up during the early morning hours, or whenever electricity service is provided, in order to cook food for the rest of the day, which will later be eaten cold or even rationed by skipping one or two meals during the day.

Given the scarce availability of fuel, both school and work schedules have been reduced or interrupted; in other words, more people remain at home while receiving less income. Due to the long hours without electricity and the country's tropical climate, perishable foods spoil more easily. Combined with food inflation, this places most Cuban families in a situation of risk and constant stress.

According to FMP's Food Security Survey, more than 93% of respondents have lost access to basic foods over the past year; 82% fear new government measures that could further worsen the situation; 86% have worried about the possibility of losing refrigerated food during power outages, while 47% report having suffered losses of this kind. In addition, 88% have had to change their daily routine in order to prioritize the cycles in which basic services such as electricity or water are available. In this scenario, the data also show a negative public perception

of government performance: 80% identify the country's failed administration as the main cause of the crisis.

In response to these events, the state has prioritized character assassination, police repression, and social intimidation. Food Monitor Program recalls that social protest, as a reaction to the reality Cubans are living through, cannot be treated merely as a public order problem. The observatory also warns that the current situation requires urgent, transparent, and verifiable responses aimed at protecting basic rights. At the same time, it urges the international community to view the demonstrations in Cuba as a critical and truthful sign of social exhaustion in the face of a crisis that is no longer expressed only through macroeconomic indicators and cannot be minimized through political discourse, but instead has deep impacts on the present lives of Cubans and on future generations.