



**Cuban Civil Society Support Program  
(CCSSP)**

Contract Number DOT-I-00-03-00009-00

**Monthly Report**

**October 2011**

*Submitted November 7, 2011*

## 1. Country Situation Update

### **Laura Pollán, 1948-2011**

With the death of Ladies in White leader Laura Pollán on October 14, 2011, continued demonstrations by the group marked its progression from loosely affiliated family members of detained dissidents to a sustained movement committed to 'changes for the better of the country.' Following the release of Pollán's husband Hector Maseda in February 2011, the Ladies in White continued weekly campaigns calling for the release of all political prisoners, and championing broader human rights issues. Despite frequent and often violent harassment by government supporters, coordinated by the Communist Party or Interior Ministry, the Ladies in White continue their iconic demonstrations, gaining international recognition for their efforts, first the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought by the European Parliament in 2005, and more recently in April 2011, the United States Human Rights Defenders Award. On October 23, 2011 approximately 50 women attended the first organized demonstration by the Ladies in White following the death of Pollán, but several dozen women attempting to attend mass in Havana and Santiago were detained by police or prevented from leaving their homes by 'security operatives,' *turbas* or mobs of pro-government supporters. Those detained were later released after mass services had concluded. Ladies in White spokeswoman, Berta Soler condemned the Castro Regime's latest attempt to contain the group's demonstrations, and vowed to continue the weekly marches in honor of Pollán's memory.

### **SMS & 'Cyberwar'**

Cuba alleged earlier this month that Radio/TV Martí is violating international laws through a mass SMS-text messaging service, branding the communications program as a 'massive operation' in the U.S. government 'cyberwar' against the country's Communist Regime. Radio/TV Martí asserts that the SMS-based information campaign is 'within the guidelines for the use of cellphones,' and 'certainly not intended to disrupt anything' in response to Cuba's complaints that the system's capability to send up to 24,000 messages per week to cell phones on the island may overburden Cuba's cellular network and fully disrupt service for the one million reported users. Radio/TV Martí maintains that the text message system is used to deliver the same kinds of information already broadcast to Cuba through other media channels, and that the effort is open and transparent.

Cuban State Security responded to the allegations against the Broadcast Board of Governors, Radio/TV Martí and a Maryland-based contractor, Washington Software, Inc. by recommending that all mass SMS texts coming into the island be blocked. Internal Security sources suggested that the Regime has studied mass SMS technology extensively, and could send the same type of mass SMS to North American cell phones, but would not 'violate international norms.' To date, there have been no reports of SMS outages or service disruptions.

## 2. Programmatic Highlights and Major Activities

### ***Programmatic Activities:***

### ***Key Programmatic Accomplishments:***

- *Sector CP - This innovative sector seeks to counter apathy and stimulate civic engagement by supporting media projects that communicate positive, unbiased messages through different aspects of everyday life and humor. In previous activities under this sector, the CCSSP created a*

*variety of media products and was able to shape the social content of the items produced to promote civic analysis and a sense of duty for the targeted audience.*

- [SJO101]: As a follow on to activities developed under SJO074 and SJO092, this grant will support 4 additional deliverables according to new guidance and technical requirements. The grantee and technical specialists met for strategic planning sessions to develop a new dissemination strategy based on social networks and to define product content. Products will be distributed via this new strategy in November, and were developed according to a revised production schedule throughout October.
- [SJO102]: This grant will support the continuation of activities started under grants SJO070 and SJO079, including 3 different deliverables for distribution. The grantee and project team members have held strategic meetings to develop a work plan for the next six months, and to finalize a social network dissemination strategy. Production of deliverables began in October with a target launch for distribution the second week of November.
- [SJO103]: This follow-on activity to SJO076 will create additional products for distribution through popular social networks. During October, the dissemination strategy has been reviewed and strengthened in order to increase product visibility and popularity. CREA has met with the grantee for strategic planning sessions and has defined priorities according to the dissemination strategy, product content and target audience.
- [SJO104]: This grant launches a new initiative to develop a new product targeted toward a new audience demographic, to be distributed across several platforms. During October, the grantee has defined technical requirements and is assembling the design and development team, a necessary preliminary phase to strategy sessions planned for November that will produce plans, frameworks and technical details for production.
- [SJO105]: Based on ideas similar to SJO104, this new initiative will launch a new product to promote the development of local communities and group collaboration skills. The grantee has formulated technical requirements and defined a design and production team. During November, data collection on issues of cultural and social importance will be conducted to inform product content and design.
- ***Sector CP (2) - This sector has exponentially exceeded expectations, and has demonstrated a true desire for freedom of expression and a need for increased networking capacity on the island. Therefore, the CCSSP has allocated significant resources toward achieving further success in this sector.***
  - [SJO094]: The grantee has submitted a final activity report that has been approved by CREA. Final expense reports are under review, and final administrative closeout procedures are in process to be completed in November.
  - [SJO098]: This grant is complementary to SJO100 and provides access to an additional tool to enhance capabilities of the platform. Final reports and deliverables will be submitted in November.
  - [SJO100]: This grant is a follow-on activity to SJO094, to further support the transition of the initiative to a sustainable structure. The grantee held a training session for new staff in an off-site location to transfer program and management responsibilities to these new personnel. Bi-weekly and monthly activity reports have been submitted and are under review by CREA.

- **Sector US** – In this sector, CCSSP explored the reality of this population group and discovered significant potential for civic initiatives. With Latin American NGOs whose experience and characteristics are similar to the target population, civic activities are conducted to influence independent action.
- **Other Activities**
  - [SJO082]: After unexpected delays in processing travel documentation, grantee staff traveled to the island to perform field work. They have successfully reconnected with all community groups identified under previous grants, and as of the final week of October, at least 80% of small victory projects are ongoing. Reports for Milestone III will be submitted during the last week of October, and the field team will return to their country at the end of November.
  - [SJO085]: This grant is in the process of closing, following submission of a narrative report detailing the cash disbursement activities carried out between June and August. The report has been accepted by OTI/CREA. The grantee has also submitted a final activity report that is under review, and final administrative closeout procedures are underway.
  - [SJO090]: This grant is implemented in parallel to SJO082. OTI/CREA was able to add two specialists to the team from SJO082 to expand field work reach and support implementation. Reports from these experts will be included in the final report for SJO082 following the return of the team in late November.
  - [SJO095]: OTI/CREA met with the grantee for a training and design session on a new impact measurement methodology. The grantee is preparing final reports and project design materials to begin a follow-on activity in December.
  - [SJO096]: The beneficiaries have initiated activities established in the approved work plan. To support these activities, a cash disbursement has been issued and sent to the beneficiaries. These funds will cover activities planned for November.
  - [SJO097]: A cash disbursement has been issued to beneficiaries under this grant to support logistics and coordination to prepare the grant’s main activity. The grantee is working closely with beneficiaries to ensure proper administrative tasks are conducted.
  - [SJO099]: The grantee signed the Grant Agreement during last week of October. A representative of the beneficiary group will travel to a third country to participate in a strategic planning meeting for future activities and implementation methodology. A new BIS export license application has been submitted to support activities under this grant.

**Program Operations**

- Grants cleared to date: **103** (3 pending, 14 in process, 9 completed, 65 closed, 7 cancelled, 5 rejected after clearance)

Status Count				
Pending	Cleared	Completed	Closed	Cancelled / Rejected
3	14	9	65	7 / 10* <i>*5 had been cleared</i>

CANCELLED		
1	SJO013	\$9,825.00
2	SJO043	\$5,687.00

3	SJO045	\$16,707.00
4	SJO059	\$3,325.00
5	SJO088	\$14,808.00

6	SJO089	\$17,654.00
7	SJO091	\$3,929.00
<b>Subtotal:</b>		<b>\$71,935.00</b>

CLEARED		
1	SJO075	\$69,655.00
2	SJO082	\$185,409.00
3	SJO083	\$35,491.00
4	SJO084	\$91,254.00
5	SJO090	\$39,710.00
6	SJO094	\$144,922.00
7	SJO095	\$36,760.00
8	SJO096	\$50,425.00
9	SJO097	\$49,482.00
10	SJO098	\$70,000.00
11	SJO099	\$61,952.00
12	SJO100	\$175,400.00
13	SJO102	\$81,301.00
14	SJO103	\$13,164.00
<b>Subtotal:</b>		<b>\$1,104,925.00</b>

CLOSED		
1	SJO001	\$95,420.00
2	SJO003	\$17,157.00
3	SJO006	\$81,421.00
4	SJO007	\$123,098.00
5	SJO008	\$34,332.00
6	SJO009	\$24,256.00
7	SJO010	\$30,359.00
8	SJO011	\$19,601.00
9	SJO012	\$14,204.00
10	SJO014	\$47,453.00
11	SJO015	\$7,328.00
12	SJO016	\$72,709.00
13	SJO017	\$2,345.00
14	SJO018	\$12,759.00
15	SJO019	\$89,059.00
16	SJO020	\$11,430.00
17	SJO022	\$72,098.00
18	SJO024	\$12,784.00
19	SJO025	\$86,994.00

20	SJO026	\$4,655.00
21	SJO027	\$4,743.00
22	SJO028	\$63,655.00
23	SJO029	\$57,625.00
24	SJO030	\$17,830.00
25	SJO031	\$5,876.00
26	SJO032	\$78,769.00
27	SJO033	\$74,390.00
28	SJO034	\$65,522.00
29	SJO035	\$19,429.00
30	SJO036	\$14,525.00
31	SJO037	\$36,210.00
32	SJO038	\$99,163.00
33	SJO039	\$38,510.00
34	SJO040	\$141,427.00
35	SJO041	\$4,947.00
36	SJO042	\$21,551.00
37	SJO044	\$86,900.00
38	SJO046	\$21,940.00
39	SJO047	\$29,152.00
40	SJO048	\$4,542.00
41	SJO049	\$89,900.00
42	SJO050	\$129,050.00
43	SJO052	\$53,161.00
44	SJO053	\$12,248.00
45	SJO054	\$30,309.00
46	SJO055	\$55,503.00
47	SJO056	\$69,091.00
48	SJO057	\$4,538.00
49	SJO058	\$125,571.00
50	SJO062	\$54,802.00
51	SJO063	\$8,819.00
52	SJO064	\$4,284.00
53	SJO065	\$25,886.00
54	SJO066	\$17,316.00
55	SJO067	\$86,732.00
56	SJO069	\$19,149.00
57	SJO070	\$28,838.00

58	SJO071	\$55,674.00
59	SJO072	\$213,130.00
60	SJO073	\$24,155.00
61	SJO074	\$36,328.00
62	SJO077	\$176,206.00
63	SJO080	\$6,918.00
64	SJO081	\$12,245.00
65	SJO086	\$11,225.00
<b>Subtotal:</b>		<b>\$3,097,246.00</b>

COMPLETED		
1	SJO061	\$26,671.00
2	SJO068	\$46,723.00
3	SJO076	\$71,104.00
4	SJO078	\$40,251.00
5	SJO079	\$63,136.00
6	SJO085	\$42,903.00
7	SJO087	\$90,000.00
8	SJO092	\$80,549.00
9	SJO093	\$90,000.00
<b>Subtotal:</b>		<b>\$551,337.00</b>

PENDING		
1	SJO101	\$157,290.00
2	SJO104	\$66,158.00
3	SJO105	\$94,516.00
<b>Subtotal:</b>		<b>\$317,964.00</b>

REJECTED		
1	iSJO001	
2	iSJO010	
3	iSJO011	
4	SJO002	Rejected After Clearance
5	SJO004	
6	SJO005	
7	SJO021	
8	SJO023	
9	SJO051	Never Approved
10	SJO060	

### **Administration and Operations**

- **Activity Database (ADa):** CREA staff continues to update the Activity Database with information from the field. In addition, the DC-based team is working closely with the Implementation team in the field to ensure weekly tracking of grant expenditures and maintain adequate grant / operations funds control.
- **Procurement:** To support future material assistance distribution to beneficiaries on the island, a new BIS export license application was submitted. This license will cover all planned and potential needs for the duration of the project, and the license is expected to be issued in late November.
- **Finance:** All financial transactions continue to be managed from Washington, D.C. The HQ team will be supported by a finance assistant in the field who will work closely with grantees to ensure timely grant implementation.
- **Human Resources:** A Field Finance Assistant and part-time Program Assistant have joined the team and are supporting financial management and activity implementation efforts. The Operations Manager will be working remotely beginning the second week of November through the end of the project.
- **Extension:** New activities have been initiated according to the approved work plan, and implementation will continue accordingly.

### **3. Budget Information**

<b>CLIN</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Obligated</b>	<b>Disbursed September 2011</b>	<b>Cumulative Amount</b>
001	Operations	\$ 4,887,599		\$ 63,221.98	\$ 4,380,816.47
002	Fixed Fee Operations	\$ 244,380		\$ 3,161.10	\$ 219,040.57
003	Grants	\$ 10,486,156		\$ 117,280.27	\$ 4,099,506.64
004	Fixed Fee on Grants	\$ 204,000		\$ 2,345.61	\$ 81,990.12
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 15,535,979</b>	<b>\$ 11,170,671</b>	<b>\$ 186,008.95</b>	<b>\$ 8,781,353.81</b>

### **4. Problems Encountered: Issues and Proposed Actions**

- There were no significant issues in this period.

### **5. Upcoming Activities**

CREA has the following activities planned for November 2011:

- The team from SJO082 and SJO090 will return to their countries after conducting 8 weeks of field work. A full report of activities is expected by the second week of December.
- A second cash disbursement for SJO096 will be issued to cover upcoming activities.
- A representative of the beneficiary group from SJO099 will travel to a third country to meet with OTI/CREA and grantee staff. This session will include coordination on an upcoming training activity and planning for future joint efforts with the grantee between January and March 2012.
- A new cash disbursement will be issued for SJO099 to support several activities included in the grant plans.
- CREA staff will participate in a third country training to support implementation of the project designed under SJO095.
- Beneficiaries under SJO097 will complete pre-trip coordination and travel to a third country to participate in project management training.
- Product deliverables under SJO101 and SJO102 will be completed and submitted to OTI/CREA for approval.

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- Dissemination activities under SJO103 will be implemented throughout the month.
- Preparation deliverables detailing technical requirements and work plans will be submitted under SJO104 and SJO105.
- A follow-up grant to SJO083 will be submitted for approval to OTI.