

FINAL DECLARATION OF THE 8th INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM FOR THE FREEDOM OF THE CUBAN FIVE AND AGAINST TERRORISM

For the 8th time we are gathering in the beautiful city of Holguín. A city that despite the terrible damage caused by hurricane “Sandy” in several municipalities, has opened its doors so solidarity friends from all over the world can exchange their experiences and plan new activity to continue the struggle for the life and freedom of the Cuban 5 and for the end against terrorism.

After 14 years of unjust imprisonment, the situation of our Five brothers is in a crucial moment. Next September 12, will mark the 15th year of being prisoners of the empire as revenge against the people of Cuba because of their decision to be free and independent. Noam Chomsky, the well-known US linguist said a few years ago “The situation of the Five is so scandalous that it is hard to talk about”. This scandal is due to the absolute impunity of the various US administrations who favor the Miami based terrorists while at the same time giving brutal sentences to the Five who were trying to prevent more crimes from such groups. Today, almost 15 years later since they were arrested, this colossal injustice has left an impact that is hard to remedy for them and their families.

The appeals, motions, Habeas Corpus and statements presented for the defense, fell on the deaf ears of the same Judge that condemned them in the first place. Due to this inexorable passing of time, we have to ask ourselves, with great concern, what will be the physical and mental consequences on the physical and mental health of the Five and their family after so many years of this cruel punishment.

Fernando: shares his cell with 10 inmates without space for even his personal belongings, including his books and letters. He will be released on February 27, 2014. He was 35 years old when arrested; now he is 49.

René: was arrested when he was 42 years old and after serving his complete unjust sentence he was freed on October 7, 2011. He just finished his first of three years of supervised probation, that won't end until October 7, 2014. This additional time was imposed on him because he was born in the US. He is confined in Florida, a place where terrorist groups reside; his life is in constant danger. In June of this year René lost his brother Roberto, a brilliant defense lawyer who we are dedicating this Colloquium to. Rene could not attend his brother's funeral nor accompany his parents on this saddest of occasions. Rene is 56 years old and recently became a grandfather of a boy he only knows through photos. He has not been able to see his wife Olga because the U.S. continues to deny her a visa to enter.

Antonio: will be free on September 18, 2017. For the same absurd reason affecting Rene, he will have to serve an additional 5 years of supervised probation added to his sentence. Tony, 40 years old when he was arrested, is now 54. His mother, Mirta, just turned 80 and continues to knock at doors all over the world for the freedom of Tony and his 4 brothers.

Ramón: was arrested when he was 35 years old, now he is 49. His youngest daughter Lizbeth, was only 1 year old when he was arrested. Ramón will be free don October 30 2024.

Gerardo: was 33 years old when he was arrested, today he is 47. His two life sentences plus 15 years has condemned him to be in prison for the rest of his life. In another act of cruelty the US government has denied to his wife Adriana a visa to visit him in prison and also has denied them their right to have the children they had planned to have.

The dates of return of the Cuban 5, will be determined by a “jury of millions” that in the words of Gerardo is the basis of the solidarity in their case. For all the reasons mentioned above it is necessary to multiply our actions to coordinate and improve the ways of organizing that will reach more people; that will be the key to maximize the great capacity of the committees that are working all over the world for their freedom.

Therefore, the 333 delegates from 44 countries present at the 8th International Colloquium for the Freedom of the Cuban Five and Against Terrorism make the following appeal:

1. To continue to intensify the actions in the United States focusing on pressuring President Barack Obama who was recently re-elected, recently reelected, to use the powers invested upon him by the US Constitution to free the Cuban 5, on humanitarian grounds and allow them to return home without conditions.
2. To support the defense lawyers their Habeas Corpus pursuits and the proposal of Martin Garbus to declare the trial of the Five unconstitutional. To do that, we propose to organize forums, debates and conference with lawyers, in the US and in the rest of the world.
3. To organize the Second Actions of Solidarity “5 days for the Cuban 5” in Washington DC, including a rally in front of the White House and in front of US embassies all over the world. Also adopt in each country the recognizable “Obama Give me Five” poster to be pasted up in each countries language in co ordination with the events in DC.
4. To resume the work of the International Commission for the Right of Family Visits and demand of Obama that until the Five are released to grant visas to Olga and Adriana so they can visit their husbands in US prisons. The Commission currently includes 150 personalities from 27 countries including two Nobel Prize winners. It is necessary in each country where members of the commission exist to send letters to the US State Department demanding these visas.

5. To send a letter to First Lady Michelle Obama, with copies to the US Secretary of State and Attorney General, on behalf of the International Gathering of Mothers and Women for the Freedom of the Five that met in Holguin during the colloquium.
6. To intensify the work with members of Parliaments all over the world to achieve a strong statement to be sent to the US congress and to President Obama, particularly from the European and Latin America Parliaments and to encourage them to try and visit the Five.
7. To continue the successful campaign the 5 of each month for the Five by sending messages through email, letters and phone calls to the White House. This includes continuing the letter campaign running in conjunction from different personalities that denounces the injustice and calls for the freedom of the Five each month. Where possible to ask personalities from each country represented at the Colloquium to have personalities to do the same on the 5th of each month.
8. Ask union and religious leaders from Europe and Latin America, and the rest of the continents, to interact with their counterparts in the US and Canada to support cause of the Five.
9. To continue using the social networks, such as Face book, Twitter, YouTube, Blogs and alternative media and to expose the payments received by journalist from diverse media in Miami from the US government. These journalists manipulated the public opinion against the Cuban Five making it impossible for them to receive a fair trial.
10. To appeal and reach out to youth from all over the world. To encourage the OCLAE and the Worldwide Federation of Democratic Youth to include in their agendas the case of the Five while attending international forums. In particular all of those participating in the XVIII Youth and Students World Festival that will take place next year in Quito, Ecuador.
11. To propose to youth from all over the world to organize concerts during the International Actions of Solidarity on September 12. To congratulate and encourage actions like the one organized by the 5 Latin American young doctors who graduated from the Latin American School of Medicine on July 17 and since then have been traveling on motorcycles throughout Latin America calling attention to the case of the Five and to demand a greater solidarity for their cause.
12. To encourage the support of intellectuals and artists and ask them to create audiovisual messages that could be widely shared through social networks and other channels of communication.

13. To take full advantage of cultural expressions spanning from the art, literature, films, theater and dance, and to organize national and international events that include different cultural expressions to demand the freedom of the Cuban 5 whenever possible.
14. To demand that the US government extradites the terrorist Luis Posada Carriles to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.
15. To continue to denounce terrorist actions coming from the US against Cuba, the ALBA countries and Latin America in general. And to demand to that government to dismantle the terrorist organizations based in Miami, such as Brothers to the Rescue, the Cuban American National Foundation, the Democracy Movement and other groups with a long history of terrorist activity.

To all friends,

It is hard to imagine that these fourteen years of injustice continues but the key for it to be over lies in the honest men and women around the world who are working so hard for their freedom.

For Gerardo, Ramón, Antonio, Fernando and René

Let us tirelessly demand their unconditional freedom now!

Holguín, Cuba, November 30, 2012