



General Assembly

Distr.: General
3 October 2013
English
Original: Spanish

Human Rights Council

Twenty-fourth session

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural,
including the right to development**

Letter dated 30 September 2013 addressed to the secretariat of the Human Rights Council from the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Cuba to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva

I am writing in relation to the case of the five Cuban antiterrorists who have been unjustly incarcerated for 15 years in prisons of the United States of America.

In that regard, I am pleased to forward to you the Declaration of the Fourth Forum of Cuban Civil Society for the release of the Five Heroes, held in Havana on 20 September 2013.

I hereby request that that Declaration, contained in the annex to this letter, be published as an official document of the twenty-fourth session of the Human Rights Council, under agenda item 3 and in all the official languages of the United Nations.

(Signed)

Anayansi Rodríguez **Camejo**
Ambassador, Permanent Representative

Annex

Declaration of the Fourth Forum of Cuban Civil Society for the release of the Five Heroes (Havana, 20 September 2013)

The Fourth Forum of Cuban Civil Society organizations and international organizations headquartered in Cuba, for the release of the Five Cuban Heroes, meeting within the framework of the world day of action for their release, reiterates its denunciation and condemnation of the unjust imprisonment over the past 15 years of Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero and Fernando González in the United States of America. The other Hero, René González, recently returned to Cuba after serving the full term of his sentence. It would be unacceptable and extremely cruel to apply the same arrangement to the remaining four, given that their sentences are much longer and this consideration would mean that Gerardo Hernández would die in prison.

The Five Cuban Heroes were given excessively harsh sentences for crimes they were never proved to have committed, in a rigged trial held in the city of Miami, in an extremely hostile atmosphere and with no procedural safeguards, as has been proven by their defence attorneys and acknowledged by prestigious international organizations of independent jurists.

The illegal, secret payments made by the United States Government to journalists before and during the trial and while the jury was deliberating, in order to get them to publish articles making the five Cubans appear guilty to both the general public and the jury, were in themselves grounds for declaring a mistrial.

The United States prosecutors never proved any of the charges, and the court unjustly imposed life sentences on defendants who had not obtained or transmitted any secrets or harmed the United States.

These five patriots were monitoring anti-Cuban terrorist organizations, which have been acting with impunity for years in the United States, with a view to preventing new acts of wanton destruction against Cuba.

On 27 May 2005, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention found that these persons had been arbitrarily deprived of their liberty and urged the Government of the United States to take the necessary steps to rectify the situation.

The Cuban Heroes have been subjected to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment in an attempt to break their will and force them to confess to crimes they never committed. Their relatives have also been the victims of verbal attacks and rights abuses; some of them have had to endure the pain of not being able to visit the prisoners on account of the restrictions imposed on them by the United States authorities.

In the face of this injustice, the Forum of Cuban Civil Society has the moral, civic and humanitarian obligation to denounce the case of the Five in order to help increase awareness of how the United States' own laws, procedures and regulations have been infringed and how legal principles and human rights have been grossly violated in order to convict them and keep them in prison for 15 years.

The fact that the people of the United States and people worldwide are still largely ignorant of this case makes it easier for the United States Government to try to avoid acknowledging its responsibility for the situation of the four Cuban antiterrorists who are still in prison, and for their human rights and those of their families to be violated.

We, the organizations of Cuban civil society, ask the people of the United States, all men and women of good faith, to heed and support our demand for the immediate release of our four brothers, unjustly incarcerated in United States' prisons, and from this Forum we call in particular on the President of the United States, Mr. Barack Obama, in exercise of his legal powers, to put an end to this disgraceful infamy and uphold law and justice in his country by immediately freeing Gerardo, Ramón, Antonio and Fernando, and to make up for the transgressions committed by previous administrations in the handling of this case.

The Fourth Forum of Cuban Civil Society organizations for the release of our antiterrorist fighters expresses its hope, in a respectful request to the President of the United States, Mr. Barack Obama, that he will give positive consideration to this plea, which is the outcry of men and women of the valiant Cuban people.

President Obama, 15 years is too long for everyone!
