

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT

We, the undersigned Cuban citizens who disagree with various policies pursued by the Cuban Dictatorship (and, in particular, with the ferocious repression that has intensified in recent months), issue and sign this Declaration to make clear our position in the face of a significant recent development.

It is as follows: We have learned of the document that has just been handed over to the European Union (EU) authorities by two citizens who have been awarded the prestigious Sakharov Prize for Human Rights by the honourable Parliament of that bloc of countries of the Old Continent. We are referring to Berta Soler Fernández (leader and representative of the Ladies in White, 2005) and Guillermo Fariñas Hernández (general coordinator of the United Anti-Totalitarian Forum, 2010).

As is well known, in this important document, both signatories denounce the brutal wave of repression mentioned above. Since the mass protests staged by the Cuban people throughout the country on 11 July, the regime has carried out widespread and systematic reprisals of all kinds, including kidnappings, forced disappearances and arbitrary detentions. These have been compounded by summary convictions and unreasonable prosecutorial demands against peaceful demonstrators (lasting up to several lustrums). The "combat order" issued by the head of state Miguel Díaz-Canel resulted in one fatality, hundreds of wounded, more than 5,000 people arrested, more than 1,500 criminally prosecuted, of whom more than 700 remain in prison.

If we also take into account the terrible humanitarian crisis suffered by Cuban society as a result of the regime's disheartening policies and the state of vulnerability of thousands of families, we will understand that the situation is serious and desperate. To date, the demonstrations of discontent and protests against the dictatorship have not ceased, yet the regime insists on violence and repression.

In the face of the Dictatorship's unpunished actions against the Cuban people, the responses of various bodies of the aforementioned Community bloc have been, in our opinion, too lax; both laureates have shown that, for them, the tragedies of their homeland count for far more than any personal interest. They have demonstrated this by even considering renouncing this prestigious award as a way of appealing to the conscience of Europeans and all people of goodwill throughout the world. We are aware of the prestige that the Sakharov Prize carries with it and we therefore understand better the significance and commitment that the Damas de Blanco and Mr Fariñas are making in taking this decision.

In view of the above, we reiterate our rejection of the wave of repression unleashed by the regime in Havana, we demand the immediate release of all political prisoners, **we express our support for the efforts of the two Sakharov Prize winners and we call on the bodies of the European Union to adopt a more critical stance** in the face of the outrages perpetrated by the Cuban dictatorship, one that truly honours the democratic traditions of the countries that make up the European Union.

Cuba as of 13 December 2021.

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