



FREE CUBA FORUM II DECLARATION
Washington DC, May 12, 2022

Legislators for Europe and the Americas, participants of the Transatlantic Parliamentary Forum for a Free Cuba, gather in solidarity with the Cuban people and their struggle for the right to live in a democracy.

We are pleased to announce the expansion of our forum to include parliamentarians from Latin America.

In the Miami Declaration during our first meeting, we denounced: the constant oppression that the Cuban people have suffered; the state terrorism exercised against citizens; the use of violence and the militarization of an entire country to prevent peaceful demonstrations; hundreds of political prisoners; and the influence of the Cuban regime in the destabilization and collapse of democratic political systems in Latin America. In the last 6 months, since the creation of our Forum for a Free Cuba, the living conditions for those on the Island continue to deteriorate and the regime has staged new threats to the national security of several states in the Americas. United, we alert to the following pernicious developments regarding the already alarming human rights situation in Cuba and the destabilizing actions of its regime:

- After more than six decades without free, fair, and multiparty elections, Cuba continues in crisis. According to Hanke's Misery Index 2021, published in March 2022, Cuba is the most miserable country in the world, driven by a soaring inflation rate and shortages of basic products.
- At least 633 peaceful protesters have been sentenced in sham trials of up to 30 years. Currently, the regime holds more than one thousand political prisoners, many under the age of 18.
- At least 80,000 Cubans have irregularly crossed the southern border of the United States in what appears to be a coordinated reckless operation between the authorities in Havana and Managua, whose regime suddenly removed the visa restriction for Cubans in November 2021.
- The announcement made by the government of Mexico and the Cuban regime of contracting at least 500 doctors through the Cuban state is in direct violation of the free trade agreement between Mexico, Canada, and the United States -USMCA. The United States defined these "medical brigades" as human trafficking in its annual Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report. In November 2019, the UN special rapporteurs on contemporary forms of slavery used the words 'forced labor' to describe the scheme.
- The Cuban dictatorship's decision to deepen ties with the Putin regime. In December 2021, Russia threatened a repeat of the Cuban missile crisis. On January 13, 2022, Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov, repeated the threat, telling Russian TV he could "not exclude" sending military assets to Cuba and Venezuela if Ukraine talks failed. On February 22, just days before Russia's invasion, the Speaker of the State Duma, arrived in Cuba and thanked Cuba for supporting Russia's decision on Donetsk & Luhansk.
- The Cuban regime is the best transatlantic ally of the Kremlin using its press agencies to spread false news about the invasion of Ukraine and the false narrative of the Putin regime.

This is a time for the democracies of the world to unite against dictators. We reaffirm all the commitments made in the Miami declaration in November 2021. And, following up on those calls to action, we commit to influencing the executive branch and government institutions in our countries to secure:

- That they create an international effort —a coalition of nations— in support of the Cuban people’s call for freedom, with the goal to denounce the illegitimacy of the Cuban regime and support the Cuban people to regain their sovereignty. The Cuban people are prepared to carry out a democratic transition.
- That they do not negotiate with the regime, but they demand first the unconditional release of all political prisoners; the end of repression; respect in law and in practice of freedom of expression, association (including independent political parties), public assembly, and economic freedom; free, fair, internationally supervised, multiparty elections.
- That they apply political, diplomatic, and financial sanctions to those responsible for serious human rights violations, including the perpetrators in the army and the Communist Party but also the list of judges and prosecutors involved in the sham trials against the peaceful protesters in Cuba (attached the list of individuals). Each government or institution may make use of the sanction’s mechanism at its disposal, such as the Magnitsky Acts of the United States and Canada or the Global Sanctions Mechanism of the European Union.
- That they apply vigorously national and international laws forbidding the modern slavery and human trafficking practices of the Cuban dictatorship. Cancel any existing contracts through the Cuban state, hire Cuban workers directly.
- That, during the Summit of the Americas to be held in Los Angeles in June 2022, the OAS member states address the human rights situation on the island and the urgency of taking actions in solidarity with the right of the Cuban people to live in democracy, as it is established by the Inter-American Democratic Charter.
- That the member states of the European Union demand the suspension of the political dialogue and cooperation agreement through which the Cuban regime annually receives millions of dollars from European taxpayers. 'It is time to isolate dictatorships that are complacent with atrocities and crimes against humanity', as J. Borrel, vice president of the European commission, recently pointed out.

We commit to use our public platforms to advocate for the aforementioned action points as well as to as advancing them through bills and resolutions in our respective legislative chambers. “The night will not be eternal”.

Cubans, you are not alone.

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