

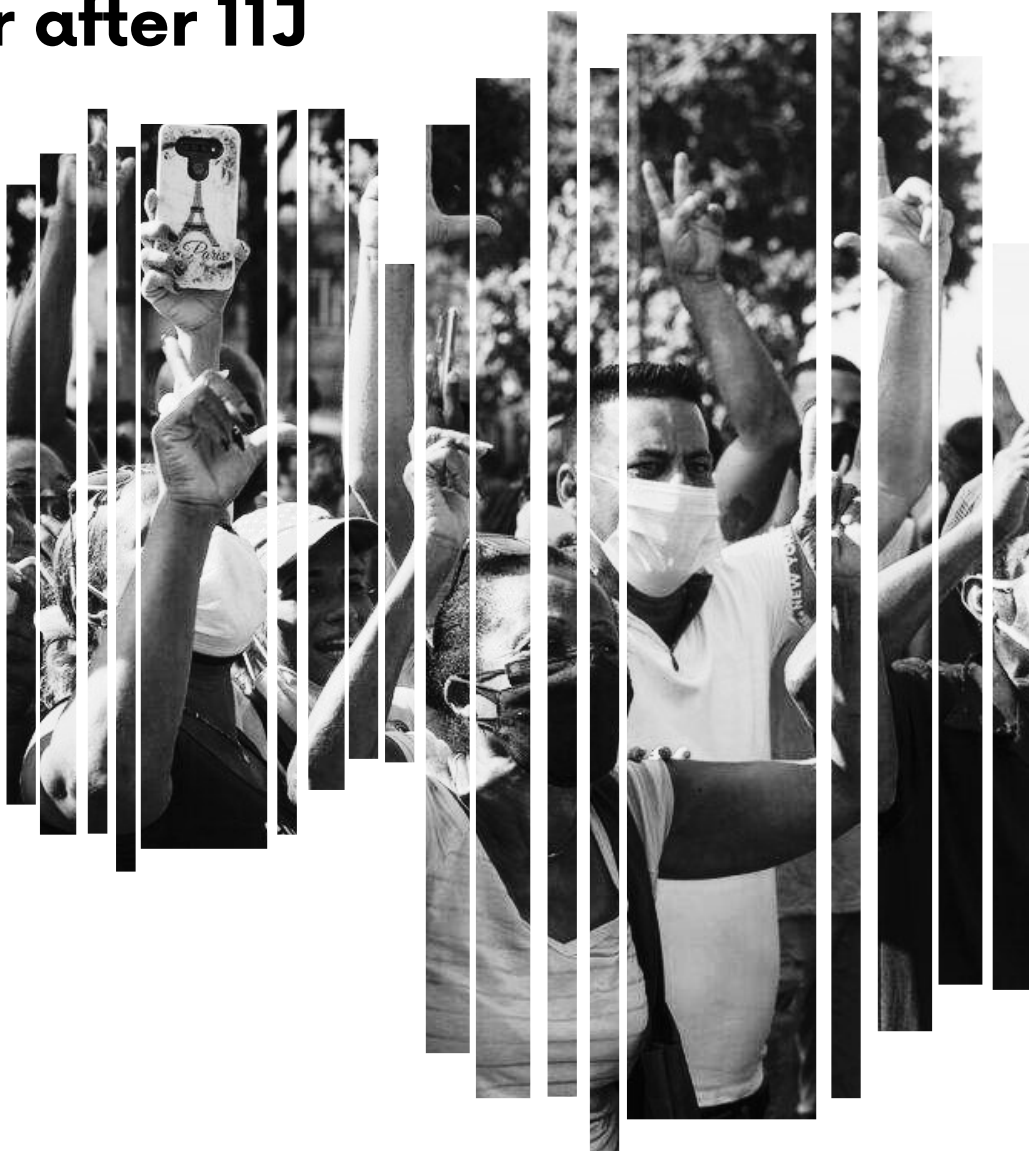
// FDP Center for Incident Reporting

Cuba, June 2022

REPORT

Pacific Demonstrations and State Terrorism in Cuba

One year after 11J



Revisa el informe completo sobre la represión en Cuba
en www.fundaciondemocraciapanamericana.org
o escaneando el código QR.

Index

01 — Foundation for Pan American Democracy (FDP)

02-14 — The road to July 11, 2021

02-03 — State Terrorism in a Cuba in Crisis

04 — Solidarity Among Brothers

05-06 — Cuba Decide

07-12 — Denis Solís and MSI

13-14 — Patria y Vida

15-16 — July 11, 2021 (11J)

17 — 11J repression in numbers

18-20 — Persecution of minors

21-44 — 11J Testimonies



The Foundation for Pan American Democracy (FDP, for its initial in Spanish) was established in 2015 by a group of Cuban and Cuban-American citizens concerned about the continued oppression and violation of human rights in Cuba and the need to uphold and promote democracy in the Americas. The Foundation has no political or religious affiliation and collaborates with local and international agencies and organizations committed to democracy and respect for human rights.

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The road to July 11

State Terrorism in a Cuba in Crisis

Cuba has suffered a communist dictatorship for 63 years. The regime has oppressed and attempted to silence a historically activated citizenry through the use of brutal violence and force. During the massive national protests of July 11, citizens peacefully demonstrated chanting "Freedom", "Change of the System", "Down with the Dictatorship" and "Homeland and Life". The regime's response included calling for a civil war to defend the revolution, thousands of arbitrary arrests, torture and fabricated trials of more than 1,000 peaceful protesters, including those under the age of 18, and leading to sentences of up to 30 years.

Despite the state terrorism exercised by the authorities and the economic and political crisis that the people are going through, the mobilization continues. Cubans do not allow themselves to be subdued by fear and deserve your solidarity to raise their voices.

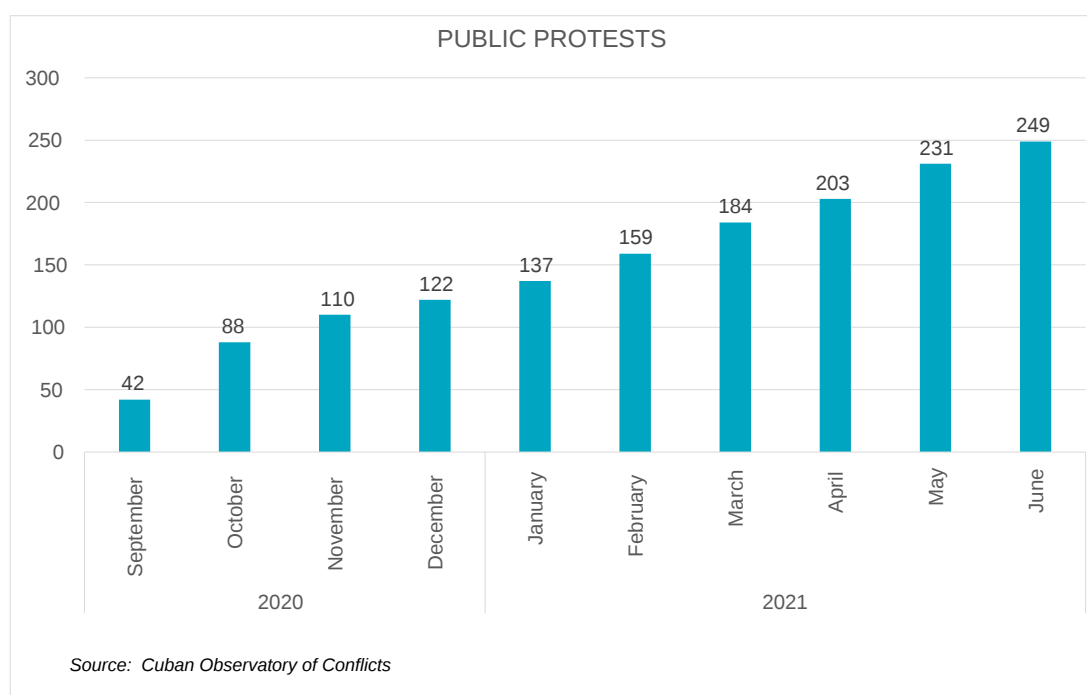
In April 2020, the socioeconomic situation of the majority of the families on the Island was so critical that the opposition and exile organizations came together to sound the alarm. At that time, the warning voice was raised about a crisis that had the potential to "become a national tragedy of unmanageable proportions", as unfortunately happened and still continues.

In the document, "we denounce before the international community the intensification of the repression by the authorities of the dictatorship, the prohibitions against the self-employed and the intensification of the violations of freedom of expression".

We warned about the danger to the life and safety of our people due to the lack of supplies and the absence of sanitary conditions in public places, including hospitals and detention centers, due to the inaction, corruption and negligence of those who hold power, aggravated by the COVID19 pandemic.

In the following months and year, the people of Cuba - just over 11 million people - had to suffer one of the worst health crises in the world, with tens of thousands of fatalities, many of whom were handed over to their relatives in sealed garbage bags -with the prohibition of opening- or buried in mass graves. In March 2022, Hanke's Misery Index 2021 published that Cuba is the most miserable country in the world, fueled by a soaring inflation and shortages of basic goods. To date, Cuba is in a deep political and economic crisis.

Citizen mobilization and protests against the regime began to intensify and become more frequent. The graph below shows the number of protests registered by the Cuban Observatory of Conflicts until June 30, 2021.



Solidarity among brothers

In May 2020, responding to the warning call, the promoters of Cuba Decide organized a massive collection in the city of Miami in which the entire community and local authorities took part. Dozens of tons of food, hygiene products and medicines were sent to the island through Christian churches. In August 2020, we announced the arrival of the containers with humanitarian aid at the port of Mariel in the province of Artemisa, but the authorities on the island confiscated the entire cargo without explanation. The confiscation caused the indignation of many in the world, but especially within the island where more than 14,000 families had registered to request the aid and dozens of independent civil society organizations were ready to distribute it.



Cuba Decide

Cuba Decide is a citizens' initiative to change the political and economic system in Cuba, generating a peaceful process of transition to democracy. It gives continuity to the largest independently organized peaceful movement in Cuba, the Varela Project, led by the assassinated opposition leader Oswaldo Payá. In 2012, Oswaldo Payá was assassinated on the island by direct orders of Fidel and Raúl Castro, in an attack perpetrated by state security agents.

The movement, Cuba Decide, is a network of thousands of Cubans inside and outside the island who promote the tool of the Binding Plebiscite. The strategy of Cuba Decide is the mobilization of citizens on the island through non-violent peaceful struggle, the activation of the diaspora and the coordination of relevant actors in the international community to force the Castro family and the rest of the individuals in command of the military conglomerate and the intelligence services of the dictatorship to submit to the sovereign will of the citizens of Cuba and initiate the democratic transition.

Since the launch of the Cuba Decide platform in 2015, thousands of citizens have joined members of the opposition in calls for change on the Island and have become promoters of Cuba Decide. According to the 2020 survey 70% of Cuban citizens on the Island are aware of the initiative. The campaign has built a coalition of dissident organizations inside and outside the island that continues to expand and work together. The promoters have mobilized a large part of the international community, influencing governments and institutions to abandon their support to the Cuban regime, to establish sanctions against the criminals in the different levels of power on the island, to denounce its illegitimacy and to contribute to the recovery of sovereignty for the Cuban people.

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Denis Solís



Rapper and activist Denis Solís before his arrest in November 2020.

In November 2020, rapper/activist Denis Solís was arbitrarily arrested. Solís, frequently harassed by Cuban police, filmed and live-streamed an officer's unjustified entry into his home. The exchange went viral and as a result Denis Solís was arrested.

At the same time, Cuban activists in the diaspora were denouncing with greater energy the growing crisis on the island. Cuban and international artists also began to denounce the dictatorship's actions. For example, during the Free Cuba Fest festival, Alexander Delgado, a member of the internationally known urban duo Gente de Zona, decided to take the step towards freedom and denounce the dictatorship. He did exactly that, amidst the applause of those present, while leaving the stage, he shouted "Freedom for Cuba. Down with the dictatorship"

San Isidro Movement (MSI)

The San Isidro Movement (MSI) is an artists' collective established in 2019. When Denis was arrested, several MSI members and other activists gathered to go out to demand his release. State security officials forbade them to leave the headquarters and the group decided to barrack. Several of them began a hunger strike (and some also went on thirst strike).



Maykel Osorbo on hunger strike.



Group of hunger strikers.



Luis Manuel Otero (Luisma) on hunger strike.

As tensions and international pressure mounted, on the eve of Thanksgiving Day, November 26, 2020, Cuban secret police, dressed as doctors, stormed the MSI headquarters, the private home of Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara, and disappeared the group on strike. The regime shut down internet and cell phone traffic shortly before raiding the house. Images of the raid were later uploaded to Facebook for the world to see.

The next day, other MSI members and artist friends decided to visit the Ministry of Culture to demand the release of Denis and all the others who had been kidnapped by the authorities in the middle of the night. Within hours, hundreds of people joined the artists in a peaceful protest demanding the release of all. Images from that night can be found under the hashtag #27N.





Artists in front of the Ministry of Culture on November 27.



Peaceful protest on November 27, 2020 in front of the Ministry of Culture, Havana.



Peaceful protest on November 27, 2020 in front of the Ministry of Culture, Havana.



Peaceful protest on November 27, 2020 in front of the Ministry of Culture, Havana.

The dictatorship was prepared for a major crackdown, but opted for a negotiated solution to avoid the spectacle. Reuters reported that "[t]he protest ended before dawn on Saturday only after officials met with 30 of the protesters and agreed to talk further and urgently review the case of a detained member of the San Isidro crew and a rapper sentenced this month to eight months in jail on contempt charges. It also agreed to ensure that independent artists would not be harassed in the future."

In the following days, the detained MSI members were released, except for Denis Solis.

Patria y Vida

The economic and political crisis continues to worsen, meanwhile, international superstars Gente de Zona, Yotuel and singer-songwriter Descemer Bueno were working on the release of a song to talk about the crisis and the 62 years of suffering of their people. They brought MSI member Maykel Castillo (Osorbo) and rapper Eliécer "el Funky" Márquez (with an appearance by Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara) into the fold and secretly filmed the music video for what would become the two-time Grammy Award-winning song and anthem Patria y Vida. The song is full of symbolism and outright dissent with the current conditions facing the people of the island. "We no longer shout: 'fatherland or death,' but 'fatherland and life,'" a direct reference to the anachronistic communist slogan of "Patria o Muerte" or "Fatherland or Death".

The song was released on February 16, 2021 and immediately went viral garnering over 10 million views on YouTube over a year. The song encapsulates the truth of what the population has been feeling for years and sheds light on what suffering continues, despite the narrative of the Cuban propaganda machine. The truth has been revealed and propelled onto the world stage. The regime immediately created its own counter-protest song that had little support and even fewer views.



Challenge in response to Osorbo's release after the people intervened to prevent his arrest.

Videos of people singing or playing *Patria y Vida* in Cuba began to surface. On the afternoon of April 4, 2021, police attempted to arbitrarily arrest rapper Osorbo, but people in the streets prevented the arrest. The iconic image of Osorbo raising his fist in defiance went viral.

July 11, 2021



Anti-government protesters march in Havana, Cuba, Sunday, July 11, 2021. Hundreds of thousands of demonstrators took to the streets in several cities across Cuba to protest against ongoing food shortages and high food prices. (AP Photo/Eliana Aponte)



People shout anti-government slogans in Havana, Cuba, July 11, 2021. Photo: Alexandre Meneghini/Reuters.

Sunday July 11, 2021 is a turning point in the history of Cuba. That day began the largest peaceful anti-dictatorship demonstration in Cuba's history. Through the internet, the news that the people of the city of San Antonio de los Baños were protesting in the streets gave way to more than 50 cities and towns joining the protests. Hundreds of thousands of Cubans across the country were chanting "Freedom", "Change of System", "Down with the Dictatorship" and of course "Fatherland and Life". Members of the armed forces in Santiago de Cuba were even filmed singing the anthem along with protesters.

The regime regrouped, repression and militarization intensified massively and the protests and demonstrations were diminished in a matter of days. However, the regime has not been able to fully contain the citizens and the protests, although much less massive due to the level of militarization and terror imposed on the country, continue. In the last month of April 2022 they reached another peak, higher even than the number of protests that took place each of the months leading up to July 11, 2021. This is one of the indicators that point to the imminence of another possible peaceful nationwide protest.



11J repression in numbers

As of May 2022, at least 633 ordinary trials have been held in Cuba related to the social mobilizations that took place in 2021 in the country, and 89 pending trials are expected to take place to date.

Total arrests: 1476 persons



1253 men



218 woman



5 unidentified persons

729 people remain in detention to date



653 men



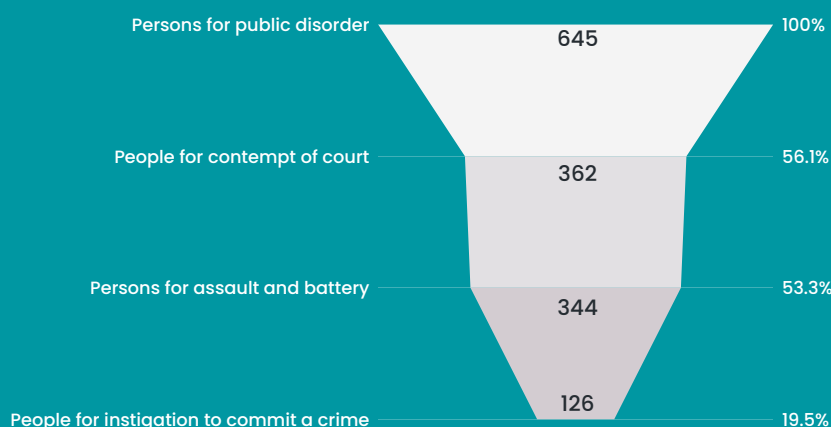
71 woman



5 unidentified persons

It should be taken into consideration that the main charges against the victims have been:

Charges are also brought against State Security:



69

Persons for sabotage

175

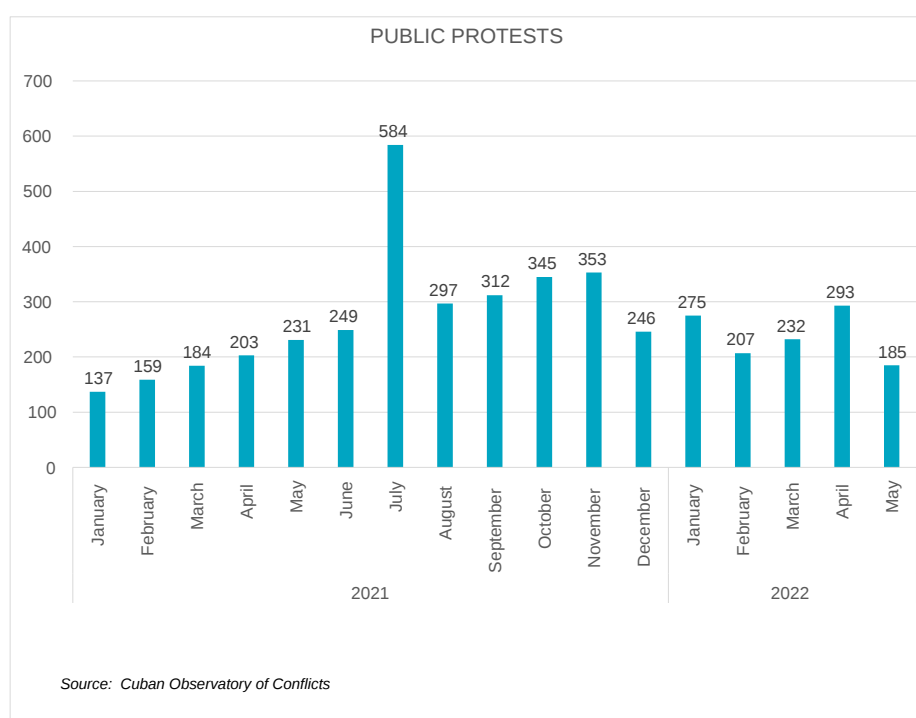
Persons for sedition

The data corresponds to information from the Justice 11J group.

Persecution of minors

According to information obtained by the FDP Center for Incident Reporting, harassment and intimidation against citizens in general has intensified. This generalization is one of the main characteristics of the repression since 11J. State Security and the police aggressively repress the freedom of expression of ordinary citizens, regardless of whether they participate in any opposition organization, seeking in this way to silence any dissident voice in the community and with the marked objective of instilling panic in the population. The same or more intense repression is suffered by activists and human rights defenders, although not exclusively. Data reported by other organizations on the characteristics of people in political prison and/or unjustly sentenced support these findings.

The FDP Center for Incident Reporting supports the commitments made by the legislators members of the Transatlantic Parliamentary Forum for a Free Cuba. Specifically, the points of the Miami Declaration of November 2021, where the following calls to action are made, which seek to influence governments and international organizations to achieve:



According to information obtained by the FDP Center for Incident Reporting, the harassment and intimidation against its citizens has intensified, and one of the main characteristics of the repression from 11J onwards is that State Security no longer attacks mainly activists and Human Rights defenders, but now does so as a generalized practice against any ordinary citizen, regardless of their participation in any organization, seeking in this way to silence any dissident in the community. Other organizations also show data supporting these findings, such as political prisoners and unjust sentences handed down by the regime.

From the FDP Complaint Center we support the Washington DC Declaration of May 2022, where the following calls to action are made, which seek to influence the executive branch and government institutions to achieve:

- 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.

- hat 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.

Testimonios 11J



Sayli Navarro Álvarez

36 years old

Arrested on July 12, 2021

Charges: Public disorder, contempt of court and assault.

Prosecutor's request: 11 years

Sentenced to serve 8 years in prison

Single, no children

Lives in Matanzas

"On July 11, 2021, I was at home. And when my father returned from the field, he took his cell phone and I started to see on social networks what had happened in San Antonio de los Baños. Then we got some images from Santiago de Cuba. I got ready and after the appearance on national television of the designated Diaz-Canel, my father and I left the house. When we reached the central highway, about 60-80 meters from where we live, there was Yuniel, a well-known officer of the political police who tried to prevent my father from continuing his walk. He punched him in the face, which caused his glasses to fall to the ground and broke one of his legs. We continued our journey along the public road. On our way to the center of town there were some incidents. We arrived at the seat of the municipal government. And then we continued to the main park, where everything ended. And we returned, walking, to our home".

"My detention and my father's one took place on Monday, July 12, when we both went to the police station in the municipality of Perico, the town where we live. We went there to find out the whereabouts of several activists of the protest organization to which we belong, who had been arrested on Sunday the 11th, as well as two other young people, non-oppositionists. The arrest was quite aggressive. Several women were involved, some dressed as police officers and at least one in civilian clothes.

They grabbed me by the neck, pulled both my arms behind me and in this way, pushing and shoving, we passed from the lobby to the interior of the police station. After an exchange of words, they placed me next to the staircase that leads to the upper floor. After about 20 minutes they took me to an office, took me to a detention report and the personal items I had and took me to the cells, where I saw my father again, who was in cell number 3. Around noon they took my father out, handcuffed behind his back. I was not allowed to make a phone call to my mother, as required by law, despite requesting it on more than one occasion. At 7:30 p.m. that same day, they took me out of the cell and the Chief of the police unit said to me: "you are going to be released but to wait for the process at home". They gave me back my belongings as well as the toiletries that my mother had taken me and that they did not give me at any time".

"The charges against me are: Public Disorder, Contempt and Assault. The evidence presented at the trial on January 24 and 25 (Oral Hearing), were: the statements of police officers and an officer of the State Security. The prosecutor's request was for 11 years and the sentence came with 8 years".

"Undoubtedly, since July 12, they fractured my family again. And the dynamics of many other Cuban families. Then came my father's imprisonment, everything we suffered after learning of his infection with COVID-19 and subsequent transfer to the Hospital. And then the hunger strike. As well as my imminent admission to prison. But we live aware that prison is one of the first recipes that totalitarian regimes have at hand for their opponents. And although it will be a difficult stage, much more for my mother, who will have to deal with the confinement of a daughter and her husband, we know that the night will not be eternal".

"We congratulate the Cuban people for the courage shown on July 11 in the streets and cities, in the face of each of the demands expressed. And to urge them that this change is in our hands. As the poet said: the path is made by walking. And that it is possible. While I thank the international community for the work in favor of the visibility and denunciation in pursuit of our prisoners and their release. It is vital that condemnations of the Cuban regime continue."



Henry Constantin Ferreiro

38 years old

Arrested on July 11, 2021

Accused of public disorder

Director and journalist at La Hora de Cuba

Single, father of two children

Lives in Camagüey

"On July 11 I was at home. And well, through the networks, specifically through Messenger (Facebook), WhatsApp and Telegram, well, in that order, I saw what was happening. First San Antonio de Los Baños, then other cities, and finally, through Telegram, I learned that there was or was going to be something in Camagüey as well. My girlfriend and I picked up a few things that we had to, well, carry, anticipating that probably, at least for me, I would be detained. We organized a few things that as part of the La Hora de Cuba team, well, we had to leave ready and we were going to get arrested, if we were supposed to get arrested. And we left for the area where, according to a Telegram group, there were people gathering. When we arrived in that area we could see many people walking in one direction, but there was no organized group left. We continued, we got transportation from other enthusiastic people who were going to the protest and we got on it and when we were arriving with the transport, stop, there I get off. Well, there I was immediately violently detained by a State Security agent. They put me in a patrol car and took me to the Second Unit. Three minutes later, they did the same to my girlfriend, who was also taken to the Second Unit of the National Revolutionary Police (PNR), detained, without having done anything, they took our phones. In the struggle against me, they also took my glasses and mask. All that fell to the ground. There are people who pick them up. And there we were in the Second Unit, detained in cells, without any rights, we were not allowed to call, we were not allowed anything for several days.

That night, July 11, well, criminal instructors appeared and took us out one asking us questions, to take our statements. So began 10 days of detention in different places, interrogations, meetings to receive threats. There was a big problem of food, health, especially for the women who were detained, isolation.

"The charges against me were public disorder, they never presented me with any evidence, because I was detained before I could get to the protest. I had no way to get to publicly convene on the networks."

"Well, life has really changed for us in a drastic way after July 11. Basically what has changed the most is the pain, the sense of responsibility, of compassion, for so many people imprisoned as a result of July 11, that we feel, people that although we do not know them, who are from other provinces, we feel them closer, because they were in the same conditions in which we were, and they had the bad luck of not being released. That is why we have tried to focus the work of the media I lead on the issue of July 11 and its victims, of those who went in search of freedom and did not have it."

"The international community must be quicker, more effective and stronger in defending the victims of repression in Cuba and in defending those who want to find a democratic Cuba. And as for the people of Cuba? Well, they must know that they cannot, that if they take to the streets, they cannot lose them, because if they lose them, there will come more repression, there will come more imprisonment, there will come more pain than that which led them to take to the streets."



Miguel Diaz Sosa

48 years old

Arrested on July 12, 2021

Prosecutor's request for 13 years

Sentenced to 8 years in prison

Does not belong to any organization

Fisherman

Married, has two children, 18 and 15 years old

Resides in San Antonio de los Baños, Artemisa province

Testimony of Yudit Ramírez Claro, Miguel's wife

"Well, he was on the sidewalk in front of the church park, where everything started, he demanded his right to work because with fishing he supported our needs after everything started in that place he and the people who were there decided to walk along the entire central avenue of the town demanding that the blackouts cease, about the shortage of medicines, among that they wanted changes, among other things."

"His arrest was on July 12 at 7:30 am. A dozen black berets showed up at my house, about 5 policemen and several state security agents, plus others from the government of San Antonio de los Baños. He was transferred to the PNR of the municipality where he was held in solitary confinement for 15 days because he was under investigation, then he was transferred to the four roads technician belonging to the municipality. After 15 days of being there he was transferred to the maximum security prison of Guanajay".

"The charges are: public disorder, contempt and assault. Well the evidence they presented was an edited video and several false witnesses manipulated by the prosecutor's office of the municipality. Petition 13 years, sanction 8 years".

"This has changed our lives completely because I did not think that the government of this country was so unjust and that it violated without any scruple our constitutional rights as any citizen. Besides being separated from my children at that age which is so difficult and the boy who has psychiatric treatment for concentration deficit has been very difficult and my mother who has also had psychiatric treatment for years is very difficult, and all this for thinking differently and demanding my rights."

"There has been a lot of repression and threats from the government and state security towards the inhabitants of the country. The message I would send them is that man must stand firm for his ideals and defend his rights even if it is the last thing he does".



Zaqueo Baez Guerrero

46 years old

Divorced, father of 4 children

Vice National Coordinator of the Patriotic Union of Cuba (UNPACU) and promoter of Cuba Decide.

Lives in Havana

"On July 11, 2021, I was at my home, which is the UNPACU headquarters in Havana, when through social networks, that is, Facebook, spontaneous peaceful demonstrations began to be seen, first in San Antonio de los Baños and then spreading throughout the country. Automatically, together with myself, several UNPACU activists and promoters of the Cuba Decide campaign, we went to the demonstration sites in several municipalities of the capital, where we lived. I never imagined that experience, seeing so many ordinary Cubans taking to the streets by the thousands to peacefully demand freedom and democracy for Cuba. A dream longed for by the Cuban people. When we arrived at the peaceful demonstrations we joined them and we saw how the Cuban people also joined in and decided to go out to peacefully demand their rights in marches throughout the length and breadth of the Cuban nation.

Something very exciting and incredible at the same time since it was all very spontaneous. Then came the worst, since the Tyrant Miguel Mario Diaz Canel gave the order to fight and they took to the streets violently against the unarmed people, paramilitary bands with sticks, stones to attack demonstrators, uniformed police with regulation weapons and other types of weapons making use of them, including firearms, which caused a real massacre to the Cuban people since there was bloodshed of people who were demonstrating peacefully. Excessive use of force on the part of the uniformed National Police, political police, military, since there were even young people in military service carrying out orders from their superiors, who were also in the place".

"When we saw so much violence and abuses against the people of Cuba by these tyrants, we took on the task of obtaining with our cell phones graphic evidence of everything that was happening and to make it known to the world so that they could see with their eyes the truth of what is happening in Cuba and in this way demonstrate that in Cuba there is a cruel and murderous tyranny, to the point that in the La Guinera neighborhood the Cuban regime acknowledged having deprived a demonstrator of his life. What happened on July 11, 2021 showed the true face of the Castro Canel dictatorship that has remained in power only at the point of guns, violating human rights and committing crimes against humanity. We then left the place to preserve all the evidence of what happened and thank God we were not arrested."

"As a result of what happened on July 11, the surveillance by the political police and national police has undoubtedly increased, I have even received threats from several repressors in which they can fabricate a crime and take me to prison for several years, since they say they can condemn me for my peaceful activism with false crimes of sedition, instigation to commit a crime, contempt, resistance, attack, non-payment of arbitrary fines, or whatever they can think of to get me off the streets because of my peaceful activism belonging to the UNPACU. In the case of my family, they feel watched and besieged."

"I know several people, that is, friends who were unjustly imprisoned by these tyrants for peacefully demonstrating on 11J and are serving long unjust sentences, since the Castro Canel dictatorship uses prison as a retaining wall to subdue the Cuban people. And they remain in power which has caused that at least that is known there are more than 1000 political prisoners in Cuba today, among them our UNPACU leader Jose Daniel Ferrer Garcia, Felix Navarro, party leader Pedro Luis Boitel, Maikel Castillo, Luis Manuel Otero Alcantara, Aymara Nieto Muñoz, Sayli Navarro, among others."

"I would never change what I did on July 11 since above all I support the non-violent struggle and wish that in Cuba there is true freedom and democracy."

"In order for another July 11 to happen in Cuba it is of vital importance the support of free and democratic countries around the world denouncing all the abuses, mistreatment, torture in prisons, unjust imprisonment, constant violations of human rights by these tyrants, the Cuban people need the support of the largest number of human rights rapporteurs denouncing, of the UN and other organizations so they can feel protected and thus be able to demand their rights peacefully."

"The message I would send to the international community is to denounce at all possible levels all the Human Rights violations that are committed daily in the country, as it is a vital support for the Cuban people. To the Cuban people not to be discouraged and to continue fighting peacefully (only peacefully) for their children, for their families and friends and for the freedom and democracy of Cuba, and for the respect of Human Rights".



Rosa Jany Milo

27 years old

Arrested on July 11, 2021

Charged with disorderly conduct and contempt of court

Prosecutor's request: 6 years

Sentenced to serve 6 years in prison

Married, mother of a 9-year-old daughter

Lives in San Antonio de los Baños, Artemisa province

Testimony of Adis Nuvia Machin, Rosa's mother

"She was arrested on the same July 11, accused of propagation of pandemic and public disorder. Her husband (Rolando López) is also being imprisoned for the same crimes, propagation of pandemic and public disorder".

"She heard about the demonstration disclosed days before by the social networks and together with her husband join to support this march, an opportunity that she did not want to miss to call the attention of the municipal authorities, and that they respond to a series of situations that had been occurring such as: the lack of medicines in the midst of a pandemic as terrible as it is the covid, the electric fluid was a disaster, not to mention the stores by MLC that have created differences between people because only those who receive remittance from abroad can buy in them. What we never imagined was that the order to attack would be given and end the peaceful demonstration in a big battle, where my daughter and son-in-law were beaten and imprisoned."

"She was missing for 16 days, that is, we really did not see her. I, as her mother, did not manage to see her until after 16 days, when they summoned me and told me that I could see her at the PNR, which is the provincial DTI here. When she went to prison, which was in mid-August, to Cuadrado prison, she was charged with one of public disorder and two of contempt, for which she is serving a 6-year sentence."

And those 6 years after the trial was held, the Prosecutor's Office, or where the first trial was held, did not lower the years. He is still serving 6 years. The second oral hearing was also held and I know the appeal process, and the Prosecutor's Office also kept him at 6 years, the judges did not want to lower his sentence by even one day."

"This has been difficult, it has been difficult for me, it has been difficult for her daughter too because the livelihood, my livelihood was her. She is self-employed, her husband too, they were in charge of her little daughter. As a result of all this, I am unemployed and taking care of my granddaughter, and thanks to God and to many people who have extended their hand to me, I have been able to get ahead. Although I stand firm and confident in front of my daughter, she knows that I have my heart torn, not to mention the economic shortages we are going through because I have no job, only my son contributes to the economy of my home and she knows about this situation".

"After this, my daughter's life changed, today I can say that emotionally she is affected, she lives difficult moments because the prison for someone who is innocent is very hard and more when you leave behind the most important thing that a mother has and that is her daughter, she has the faith that justice will one day touch her life".

"I do not know if a July 11 will really happen again in Cuba, and I am speaking for her. I do not know if young people and adults can understand that we do not need to go out to any country to carry out an internationalist mission, to risk our lives in order to have what we need.

We can demand, ask for a change in our country. That we can have the same things that all human beings have to live. What is necessary to live, which is medicine, food, a decent job. That we can earn money, and with that we can earn enough to be able to clothe and shoe our family, and feed them".

"I hope that a day like this will come again, that young people will have opportunities and people, as I said, to demand our rights, but to keep us, until each one of our concerns and our doubts are clarified, answered. I would like to send a message to the whole world, that please keep remembering the political prisoners and do not forget them."

"These guys really did not commit any crime, my daughter has not committed any crime. My daughter went out to demand in the only way she found a change and an improvement for her life and that of her little daughter. She did not commit any crime and she is serving 6 years in prison separated from her daughter."

"She is really proud of herself, she knows that what she did was not a crime and she does not feel like a delinquent, nor does she feel that she is a frustrated person, on the contrary, she feels that at that moment she learned to demand the rights that she had been entitled to for a long time."

"That they do not forget that expressing nonconformity in something and expressing it in front and with dignity is a wonderful quality and that they do not stop thinking about these young people who one day asked for something that since they were children they were taught that they were their rights."

"To my people I ask you not to forget that freedom is a right not a gift."

Fatherland and life!



Ángel Jesús Véliz Marciano

24 years old

Sentenced to serve 6 years in prison

Does not participate in any organization

Physical education teacher

Self-employed in a bar and restaurant

Single and childless

Lives in Camagüey

Testimony of Ailex Marciano, Angel's mother

"He participated in the peaceful demonstrations of July 11 in the city of Camagüey, he spontaneously joined the demonstration and by his own individual decision.

She was at home, when she heard about it through the noise of the crowd, she decided to be one more among hundreds of known and unknown people, all of them in a very emotional and peaceful way. They were shouting slogans, singing the notes of the national anthem and calling for change and freedom."

"The arrest was at his home in an arbitrary manner, after violating his house by the Ministry of Interior and State Security. Before, in a cruel manner, they manipulated his mother and used inappropriate methods to extract her from her home in order to execute the arrest of her son, who was in the absence of his mother in the care of his 77-year-old grandfather who suffers sequelae of cerebrovascular accidents and subsequently whom they left alone at the mercy of the neighbors."

"He is accused of public disorder and assault. Evidence against him only shows photos of his participation in the demonstrations. The prosecutor asks for 8 years in prison, but he is finally sentenced to serve a sentence of 6 years."

"Since his arrest for his mother and family, life has been transformed into agony, uncertainty, considering everything very unfair. Surveillance, persecution, summons, questioning, threats. His mother is no longer working as a sports psychologist at the provincial sports medicine center in Camagüey".

"To the international community, I would ask for unconditional support to the Cuban people, we are in need of it, we feel oppressed, like slaves on the island. We need to live! To the people of Cuba I would say that we should not lose faith and hope that someday we will be free. That we trust in God above all things. That in our hands will be the future of our nation".



Roberto Perez Fonseca

39 years old

Arrested on July 16, 2021

Accused of assault, contempt of court, instigation to commit a crime and public disorder.

Prosecutor's request: 12 years

Sentenced to serve a 10-year prison term

Worker

Single and father of 2 children

Lives in San José de las Lajas, Mayabeque

Testimony of Liset Fonseca, Roberto's mother

"On July 11 he was at home, when he heard about the demonstration he was one of the first to join in. They demonstrated peacefully through part of the town, when they reached the center of the town Diaz Canel gave the order to fight and the confrontation began. Roberto breaks a photo of Fidel Castro, when he leaves he sees how the police are beating a young man and verbally rebuked a uniformed officer.

He was arrested at home, plainclothes and uniformed police came and he was beaten when he arrived at the police station.

On July 5 he was transferred to Quivicán prison without notifying his family. He became ill with Covid and was transferred to the AIDS prison for 15 days, after which time he returned to the Quivicán prison, where he was quarantined for 10 days. All this time the family had no knowledge of what was happening.

While at the San José police station, 3 witnesses came forward to testify that Roberto had not committed any violent act (he had not thrown stones or bottles, of which he was accused). These witnesses do not appear in the file.

The police officer with whom he had the verbal altercation is the one who filed the complaint. He is the only one who accuses him, without any other proof, only his word.

In the trial and appeal his defense presented 5 witnesses and a video, which were not taken into account.

In prison he has been threatened by the prison authorities with transfer to another province.

At the moment he is in Melena prison where the conditions are very bad, when it rains they get wet, there are bedbugs, the bunks are glued together, very bad hygiene. He was threatened that if he reported this situation they would take measures against him".

"The family's life has completely changed. Roberto was in charge of providing what was necessary. In addition to living with the uncertainty of what might happen to him, he is serving a sentence while innocent.

I believe that at some point another IJ could happen because of all the injustices that are experienced on a daily basis."

"I would ask the international community to raise their voices against so much evil and injustice in which the Cuban family lives and to support us to get out of this nightmare".

"To the people of Cuba, I do not know how we will do it, but we must unite to put an end to those who trample on us".



Maikiel Armando Peña Suárez

22 years old

Accused of public disorder, contempt of court and sabotage.

Arrested on July 13

Sentenced to 8 years in prison

Does not belong to any organization

Self-employed barber

Single, no children

Lives in Mayabeque

Testimony of Elienay Suárez, mother of Maikiel Peña

"On July 11 he was coming from his father's house and when he arrived at the park he saw the demonstration and joined it to demand freedom and a change for Cuba. He was arrested on July 13 at his girlfriend's house. He was taken to Nueva Paz and from there to the notorious "Prisión del Sida" (AIDS Prison). The charges are public disorder, contempt and sabotage. They presented a smell test against him and a blood test. The smell test gave the same positive stone to 3 people including him and the blood test to his blood group B+ when there are millions of people with that same group. He was finally sentenced to 8 years in prison."

"July 11 changed our lives totally, I do not adapt to be without him, I have a 2 year old child who calls his brother every day and suffers a lot his absence. Also because of all these events the father of the little boy abandoned me, today I am alone with my little boy, he took us out of the house saying that I was counterrevolutionary and left us in the street, but the most painful thing of all is to go to see my son and turn my back and leave him there and his little brother clinging to his neck as we left, this has marked our lives forever."

"Another 11J could happen in Cuba if people would lose their fear because they see how they harass us relatives for making denunciations or interviews and the truth is that people are afraid, but I believe that at a given moment it could happen again."

"I would tell the international community to help us to free our prisoners and to make it known that it is unjust that they are imprisoned for asking for freedom, serving long sentences in depressing conditions, and I ask the people of Cuba to stand up for the prisoners who went out to ask for freedom for everyone and today they are paying a high price."



Keilylli de la Mora Valle

29 years old

Activist, promoter of Cuba Decide and Movimiento Consenso Ciudadano in Cienfuegos.

Beneficiary of a precautionary measure of protection from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR).

Single, childless

"On July 11, 2021, it marked me in a way that I went out, I found out about the demonstration, I found out that they were demonstrating in San Antonio de los Baños because a friend called me on the phone, because unfortunately my internet had been blocked on that date, he arrived at my house, I got dressed and went out to the place where the people were gathering to demonstrate here in Cienfuegos. I could not get there because a few kilometers from the place, I was stopped by State Security, where the head of State Security was, I was walking and on the road they detained me, they covered my mouth, they took my phone, they put me in the car, from there they took me to the police unit, there they kept me for about two hours until they transferred me to another unit, better known as everyone sings or technician here in the province of Cienfuegos.

When I got to the technician they wanted to fabricate a case, a public case that they could not prove because I could not get to the demonstration, they detained me before I got there, I could not get there, for that reason they could not charge me, they could not accuse me. They detained me for more than 72 hours there in the unit without any charges, just detained."

"Detained there for 72 hours, I get out and they release me, only with threats, without any charges, but for me it marked a victory over the regime because at least in my town, in my city, people had never demonstrated in that way and being there in the police unit I heard the stories of the other boys who were detained, how it was and I liked it, it gave me more strength to continue fighting for the freedom of Cuba, because really so many youth, so many people who stopped to demand freedom was impressive. So that was what changed on July 11 and for me that gave me much more strength to fight, I currently have a leader friend imprisoned since July 11, we still have to keep fighting for them, also because they are in prison, of course."

"I think there can be another July 11 in Cuba, yes I do, because the people are tired of hunger, misery, repression and right now the blackouts that are happening."

"A message to the people of Cuba and the international community, is that they should not stop raising their voices, the same to the international community, that Cubans inside if they want, if we want freedom, we all have to be united and raise our voices for a free Cuba."



Mailene Noguera Santiesteban

35 years old

Detained since July 17, 2021

Sentenced to serve 4 years and 6 months in prison.

Spokesperson for the Movement of Opponents for a New Republic (MONR)

Married, mother of 2 minor children

Resident of Batabanó, Mayabeque province

Testimony of Luis Noguera, Mailene's father

"On the day of July 11, she was in the courtyard of her house, when she heard that there was a small group of people shouting and saw that it was a demonstration, she quickly took a Cuban flag that she had in her house and joined the group of demonstrators who were 10 or 15 people, where more people joined, until there were more or less 300 people or much more."

"His arrest was on July 17, at 5:30 in the morning, there were the police, the State Security, the Special Brigade and the Canine Brigade with their dogs. Her 8 year old son was sleeping when they took her to the Batabanó police, and the boy was taken in the patrol car to his father's house, and we had to treat him with a psychologist, as this affected him mentally. Then she was transferred to the Sida prison in San José, where she was brutally mistreated, not only her, but all those who were there, who had demonstrated on July 11, because on July 28 they transferred her to Guatao, the women's prison in the West, where she has been in a punishment cell, they have taken away her phone calls and her cellblock".

"The charges against her were public disorder, contempt and outrage of patriotic symbols, in which there was no proof, because all she did was to demonstrate claiming her rights. The prosecutor's request was for 6 years and 6 months; finally the sentence is 4 years and 6 months in prison".

"Everything in the family after July 11 has changed, since they have destroyed it. The children are with their grandfather and the youngest one is sick and to the family every time the security thinks that something is going to happen they visit the family and the repression is felt."

"I believe that another July 11 can happen, and my message to the people of Cuba, is that we must wake up and rise up so that there is justice in my country."

Armando Lázaro Merlán Pérez

45 years old

Arrested on July 12, 2021

Prosecutor's request for 8 years

Accused of public disorderly conduct, aggravated contempt of court, aggravated continued contempt of court

Sentenced to serve 6 years in prison

Skilled laborer, lives with his 75 and 80 year-old elderly parents

Resident of Nueva Paz, Mayabeque

Testimony of Sonia Perez, Armando's mother

"On July 12 when he was arrested he was beaten by a party official from Nueva Paz, named Olveni Raúl Miranda Gamboa, who armed with a rope hit him with it and knocked him to the ground, there were three other men working for the party and the choricera factory who kicked him and beat him on the ground, causing trauma to his right eye with abundant blood flow and lacerations all over his face, and bruises on his left side".

"In the prison of Sida, he and all those present there report that from the moment they took him out of the car, the guards received him with rounds and told him to shout "Long live the revolution" and "Fatherland and death", revolutionary slogans, and if not, they beat him to exhaustion. Also in the cells they gave him water with only one glass for a group of more than 20 people, where many of them took covid-19, including him. They put them in front of papers that they did not know what they said and forced them to sign and if they refused they beat them again."

"May the whole world pity them and my son who only went out to ask for freedom, he is not a criminal, he is innocent and their life since then, is an ordeal without their son, who was the one who supported the house and to make matters worse, his father declared himself with a heart problem, which his son in prison does not know yet. His parents need their son, because they do not want to die without having him at home".



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