

European NGOs express their support of the Declaration of Unity of the Cuban Opposition and call for Europe to also stand united on Cuba

Berlin, 26 April 2007, On the occasion of the meeting organized by the International Committee for Democracy in Cuba (ICDC) on “Democracy in Cuba: Seeking Common Initiatives”, the undersigned European NGOs gathered in Berlin express their full support of the recent declaration of unity made by the Cuban democratic opposition.

On 14 April, the leaders of the opposition in Cuba, together with members of independent civil society, adopted the declaration “Unity for Freedom”. Through this declaration the opposition proclaimed its union in seeking the establishment of democracy in Cuba. It also stated that its common goals would be the respect for human rights in Cuba, national reconciliation and social justice. These goals are to be achieved through peaceful and democratic means. The declaration also reiterates its request that political prisoners be unconditionally released without further delay.

This declaration confirms the de facto cooperation of the opposition over the past years. It is a clear signal that the different streams and movements of the Cuban democratic opposition are ready and willing to work together to establish democracy in the island.

The undersigned NGOs endorse this declaration of unity and hope and commend all individuals and groups involved in this initiative for their courage, vision and leadership.

The same leadership and courage is needed at a European level. A principled stance, whereby human rights and democratic values will prevail over national interests, is what the undersigned NGOs are requesting from European Union leaders. A stronger Common Position would allow for this and send a clear message to the Cuban opposition and Cuban people that Europe supports and endorses their struggle.

We call upon European leaders to put aside their differences, as poignantly done so by the Cuban opposition forces, and to take a common and principled stance to fully support the democratic forces in Cuba.

Maria Luisa Bascur, Cuba Futuro, Netherlands

Javier Martinez-Corbalan, Fundacion Hispano Cubana, Spain

Nikola Horejs, People in Need, Czech Republic

Katrin Wittig, International Society for Human Rights, Germany

Annabelle Rodriguez, Encuentro de la Cultura Cubana, Spain

Marianne Moor, IKV Pax Cristi, Netherlands

Natalia Bellusova, Iberoamerican Association for Liberty, Spain

Agnieszka Gratkiewicz, Lech Walesa Institute, Poland

Tomasz Pisula, Freedom and Democracy Foundation, Poland

Annika Rigo, Christian Democratic International Center, Sweden

Martin Pasiak, Pontis Foundation, Slovak Republic

Diana Ivanova, Cuba Libre, Bulgaria

Mae-Liz Orrego Rodriguez, Swedish International Liberal Centre, Sweden

Anna-Lee Stangl, Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Belgium

Eliska Slavikova, People in Peril, Slovakia

Find the text of Unity for Freedom declaration at

<http://www.icdcprague.org/index.php?id=31&news=289>