

OPEN LETTER TO UE AUTHORITIES IN RELATION WITH CUBA

Sirs

Dimitrij Rupel

Chairman of the EU Council

José Manuel Barroso

Chairman of the European Commission

Hans-Gert Pöttering

Chairman of the European Parliament

Javier Solana

High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy

RE: Normalisation of the relationships between the European Union and Cuba

Since the last conclusions of the Council in June 2007 – that presented an important step forward, though insufficient, towards the normalisation of the EU-Cuba relationships – a series of events attest of a favourable atmosphere to continue in this direction:

- The political dialogue between Spain and Cuba has been re-established.
- Cuba has been elected member of the Council of Human Rights in the UN.
- On 24th of September 2007, an exploratory inquiry has been realised between the European Troika and the Cuban authorities.
- Cuba participated in the European days of development in November 2007, on invitation of the European Commission.
- The General Direction of Development of the European Commission sent two exploratory missions to Cuba.
- A mission of European deputies of the European Socialist Group and another mission of the European United Left Group visited Cuba recently.
- Cuba recently signed the International Treaty on Social, Economical and Cultural Rights as well as the International Treaty on Civil and Political Rights.
- Between the 7th and the 9th of March, European Commissioner Louis Michel realized a successful mission to Cuba.

It is worth underlining, from the joint release of the Cuban authorities and the commissioner Louis Michel:

- Their reaffirmation for the attachment to the multilateralism, the dialogue and the negotiations to settle the disagreements.
- Their reaffirmation of the involvements in the Millennium Development Goals, and the priority to take up measures for their implementation.
- The common agreement on how the future relationships between both parties have to be alimented on a reciprocal and non discriminatory basis, and the need to work towards a settlement of the problems that hinder its development.

Considering what has been developed, the signatory organisations present the following considerations to the European Council, Parliament, and Commission, hoping for them to be taken into account in the decisions made:

- The main obstacle for the normalisation of the relationships are the sanctions imposed in 2003, which are currently suspended.

- A normalisation of the relationships will give way to re-take the cooperation links between the parties, in favour of their joint involvement in the Millennium Development Goals.

On this basis, we recommend:

- **To eliminate definitively the sanctions imposed in 2003 and currently suspended**, in the framework of the revision of the Conclusions on Cuba, from the Council, on a view to take steps towards a fast and constructive normalisation of the relationships.
- Once the sanctions eliminated, **to move towards a "framework of relationships", on the reciprocal basis of mutual respect**, that makes possible: (a) a political dialogue on different topics of common interest and (b) relationships of cooperation, that allow the articulation of experiences of each one of the parties, in favour of an agenda for a sustainable human development, on global, regional and national levels.

We are convinced that we all have a lot to win by taking a bet on the normalisation of the relationships. Likewise, we are convinced that you will know how to take advantage of the winds blowing in favour of it.

Your sincerely,

Signing:

EUROPEANS ORGANIZATIONS ET NETWORKS : Red Europea de ONG de Cooperación al Desarrollo GRUPO SUR; Red de Organizaciones MEDICUBA-EUROPA; **GERMANY**: Bremen-Cuba: Solidarität konkret ; **BELGIUM**: Koepel van de Vlaamse Noord-Zuidbeweging - 11.11.11 (103 ONG Flamencas); CNCD-11.11.11 (102 ONG Francófonas); Amis de Cuba; CETRI; Forum Nord Sud; FOS; ICS (Initiatief; Cuba Socialista);); Handicap International –Belgium **SPAIN**: Association loi 1901 AlterCultures; Casal d'Amistat CATALÀ-CUBÀ de Barcelona; Coordinadora Estatal de Solidaridad con Cuba; EUSKADI CUBA; Fundación Hijos del Maíz; Iniciativa Socialista de Izquierdas-ISI; Komite internazionalistak (Euskal Herria); Proyecto de Cultura Popular LA TERTULIA; SODEPAZ / **FRANCE**: Asociacion COLLECTIF POUR CUBA de Grenoble; Association Les Enfants d'Atacama; Asociacion mediCuba-Francia; Le Cercle Bolivarien de Paris; Comité Amérique Latine de Caen; FRANCE CUBA NATIONAL; Comité FRANCE-CUBA Lyon; Comité FRANCE-CUBA Bordeaux Gironde; CUBA COOPERATION; CUBA SI FRANCE; CUBA SI FRANCE PROVENCE; Racines cubaines; **GREECE**: Democratic Rally for Popular Freedom and Solidarity; Federation of Greek Women (OGE); Greek-Cuban Friendship and Solidarity Association; Greek Committee for International Détente and Peace (EEDYE); World Peace Council (WPC). **LUXEMBURG**: Solidarite Luxembourg Cuba; Comité "Liberte pour les Cinq - Luxembourg.

AND THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE ALSO SIGN THE LETTER : Pierre Galand (Ancien sénateur, Professeur de l' Université Libre de Bruxelles); Enrique Guerrero (Coordinador de Izquierda Unida (España) en Luxemburgo); Jean-Paul Batische (Professeur à l'Université de Reims); Frank Schwitalla (Presidente de la Red de Solidaridad con Cuba en Alemania); Pedro Rodriguez Medina (Director-Editor Combatenews); Gérard Falconnet (Enseignant-chercheur ENGREF); François Houtart (Professeur de l'Université Lovain); Carmen Serrano Jiménez; Catalina Martínez Mulero; Jacques Jausseran; Carlos Luis Froufe; Jose Noguès; Marie-Thérèse Anton; Paquita Lionnet; Juan Cartagena; Nadine Briatte; Angi Salazar; Jacqueline Le Guen; Jéssica Moraga; Virgilio Ponce; Gilberte Salem, ex-enseignante; Helmuth Markov, (MEP).