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# American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations

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12 AVR. 2006

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April 6, 2006

His Excellency Fidel Castro Ruz  
President  
Republic of Cuba  
Plaza de la Revolucion  
Havana, Cuba

Fax: 011-537-333-085

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing on behalf of the nine million women and men of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) to protest the continued imprisonment of trade unionists, human rights activists and journalists by the Cuban government.

Nearly three years ago, scores of journalists, activists and trade unionists were rounded up and imprisoned in Cuba, some for terms up to 26 years. I wrote to you in 2003 about the arrests. Among those still held are eight workers who were only accused because of their effort to form free trade unions. The eight workers are Pedro Pablo Alvarez Romas, Carmelo Diaz Fernandez, Alfredo Felipe Fuentes, Miguel Galvan, Ivan Hernandez Carrillo, Nelson Molinet Espino, and Hector Raul Valle Fernandez. Additionally, Lazaro Gonzalez Adan has been held in prison since October 2004 without charges or trial.

As a member of the International Labor Organization (ILO), Cuba is obligated to guarantee Convention 87, Freedom of Association and Convention 98, the Right to Bargain Collectively. These rights have been routinely denied in Cuba. Despite a finding by the ILO in support of the trade unionists, these workers remain in prison or under house arrest. Some of them are gravely ill due to harsh prison conditions and lack of medical attention.


The AFL-CIO calls on the Cuban government to immediately release the eight trade unionists named above as well as all other person jailed for independent, non-



President Fidel Castro Ruz  
April 6, 2006  
Page Two

violent efforts to establish freedom of association and freedom of expression in Cuba. We also call on the Cuban government to allow workers the freedom to form and join trade unions of their choosing and to collectively bargain without fear of harassment or imprisonment, in accordance with Cuba's obligations to the ILO.

Sincerely,



John J. Sweeney  
President

cc: Guy Ryder, ICFTU  
Victor Baez, ORIT  
Willy Thys, WCL  
Eduardo Garcia, CLAT

JJS/kcm