

STATEMENT BY CUBAN PRO-DEMOCRACY ACTIVISTS

An open letter to the EU

The undersigned, pro-democracy and Human Rights fighters, and other independent Cuban activists, in alphabetical order at the bottom, issue this document to raise the following matters:

The European Union (EU) moves towards the elaboration of a Convention that guides relations between the European political bloc and Cuba, similar to the ones signed with other countries. That document would replace the current Common Position of the EU on Cuba.

We have no objections of principle to make to that purpose, provided that the Convention embodies specific commitments from the Cuban side on respect, and unconditional fulfillment, of all the internationally recognized Human Rights (thus incorporating the principles that inform the present *Common Position*), provided that mechanisms will be created to ensure that the Cuban side respects what has been agreed in this matter, and there is contemplated the implementation of a *Suspension Clause* in the event of non-compliance. A different question is whether it is appropriate or not to undertake those efforts at the current juncture.

It is true that the Cuban authorities released years ago prisoners of conscience and other political prisoners, and that they have made small positive reforms in the economic field; but it is also true that they are [increasing the cruel repression against independent activists](#). This includes [new imprisonments of prisoners of conscience](#), the subjection of prisoners of conscience of the Group of 75 who remain in Cuba to a Extrapenal License which may be revoked at any time, beatings, "acts of repudiation" and arbitrary detentions, whose number has grown so alarmingly. Also, it is worth noting that the Cuban Government, on the occasion of the second [Universal Periodic Review](#) carried out this year in the UN Human Rights Council, [rejected emphatically constructive recommendations](#) made by [different democratic countries](#), in particular from the old continent.

In this context:

- We are extremely pleased that the EU and its member countries have ratified repeatedly that Human Rights and fundamental freedoms will remain at the center of relations between Cuba and the EU.
- We note that, unfortunately, the political violence that the current Cuban Government exerts and the arbitrary arrests and other violations of Human Rights that it perpetrates massively and systematically, remain obstacles -in our judgment insurmountable- in the process of creating the necessary confidence that gives credibility to the process of developing a bilateral Convention. While this situation does not change substantially, the objectives of the European Union will not be achieved.
- We express our full identification with all the fundamental principles embodied in the [EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy](#), and we believe that these principles must be implemented fully with regard to Cuba.

Given in Havana on the tenth day of the month of December 2013, LXV anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

INITIAL LIST OF SIGNATORIES

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(in alphabetical order)

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