

World Figures Back Actions for Cuban Five in Washington

Washington, Feb 7 (Prensa Latina) A large group of figures from around the world have expressed their support for the five-day international event to be held in this capital for the release of the anti-terrorist Cuban fighters unfairly held in US prisons.

Angela Davis, Danny Glover, Noam Chomsky, Ignacio Ramonet, Alice Walker, Gilbert Brownstone, Tom Hayden, Dolores Huerta, Ramsey Clark, Miguel D'Escoto, John Cavanagh, Jane Franklin, Piero Gleijeses, Stephen Kimber and Fernando Morais, among others, have joined their voices to the call for the Third 5-Day Rally for The Cuban Five, to be held on June 4-11.

The International Free The Cuban Five Committee reported that an on-line blog was created (<http://5daysforthecuban5.com/>) to show photos, footage and an update about the rally.

In a video circulating today on the Internet, the Mayor of Richmond, California, Gayle McLaughlin, invited the people to join the event, considered as a major action of the solidarity movement this year.

The event will reiterate the world demand for the release and return home of Gerardo Hernandez, Ramon Labanino, Antonio Guerrero and Fernando Gonzalez (the latter will complete his prison sentence late this month).

These men and Rene Gonzalez, who was released after serving his sentence and is already in Cuba after giving up his US citizenship, are internationally known as The Cuban Five.

They were arrested in 1998 for monitoring Miami-based terrorist groups operating against Cuba, which have killed and disabled over 5,000 people in more than half a century.

South Africa Affirms Support of Cuba

HAVANA, Cuba, Feb 7 (acn)The South African government ratified its determination to keep supporting all solidarity-with-Cuba actions and will explore new ways for bilateral cooperation with the island.

The statement was made by South African Foreign Relations and Cooperation minister Marius Fransman on Friday. He said that his country and Cuba share aspirations which guarantee the strengthening of bilateral links.

Fransman took part at an international conference in solidarity with Cuba, Western Sahara and Palestine, which was organized by the South African Parliament in Capetown, 460 kilometers from the capital Pretoria.

We want to reiterate our firm support of the legitimate struggle of the Cuban people as we will keep consolidating bilateral relations, said the minister.

Meanwhile, Interior minister Grace Naledi Mandisa said that Cuba can proudly look back at the past 55 years of revolutionary history because it has played a key role in world politics. Cuban solidarity with the world has earned the respect of many countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia, the minister noted.

ICAP Vice President Visits Angola

Luanda, Feb 7 (Prensa Latina) The vice president of the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP), Alicia Corredera, begins a visit to Angola today, where she expects to meet with different solidarity organizations.

"This is my second visit to this country. The first one was in 2010, to attend the 3rd African Meeting of Solidarity with Cuba, in which the issue of the struggle against the economic and financial blockade imposed against the island was discussed, among others, Corredera told Prensa Latina.

This time, we will strengthen here work relations with groups and movements such as the Angolan League of Friendship and Solidarity with the Peoples, and the Angola-Cuba Friendship Association.

Also on the list are meeting with the so-called "caimaneros," those graduates in the Caribbean island, and the committee for the release of the Cuban antiterrorist fighters unjustly condemned in the United States.

The ICAP vice president stated that the main interests of the Institute, such as for example the holding in Havana of the 3rd World Meeting of Solidarity with Cuba on October 27-31, will be informed in this African nation.

The visitor's agenda here also includes visiting sites of historic interest, and holding contacts with the Cuban residents here.

China Ready to Work with CELAC

Beijing, Feb 7 (Prensa Latina) China declared today to be ready to work with the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) to establish, before the end of 2014, the common forum approved at the recent summit of the regional body held in Havana.

The spokesman of the Foreign Minister, Hong Lei, said that Beijing will maintain contact with the CELAC on the mechanisms and areas of cooperation, and will work for the formal establishment of the forum and hold the first joint ministerial meeting this year.

In the first contact with the press after a suspension during the holidays on the occasion the New Lunar Year (Tet), Hong referred to the special declaration adopted at the Second Summit of Havana, on 28 and 29 January.

He said that China and CELAC are committed to the establishment of this forum, that will be an important platform for the development of a comprehensive partnership China-Latin America based on equality, mutual benefit and common development.

Hong also recalled the expressions of praise by President Xi Jinping at the adoption of this document in the high-level meeting of that regional organization of Latin America and the Caribbean.

According to the spokesman, the statement adopted in Havana shows the common aspirations of Latin America and China in terms of cooperation.

Composed by 33 nations of that region of the world, except the United States and Canada, CELAC emerged in 2011 and works with a pro tempore presidency occupied by Chile, Cuba and holds now by Costa Rica.

Canadian Band Demands Compensation After Music Used for Torture in Guantanamo

HAVANA, Cuba, Feb 7 (acn) The Canadian band Skinny Puppy will demand compensation from the U.S. for using their music to torture prisoners at the illegal naval base of Guantanamo, Cuba.

The keyboardist Cevin Key told CTV News they are also planning an additional claim against the U.S. Defense Department for using their materials with the aim of inflicting suffering on the prisoners at the naval base.

A former security guard at the prison in Guantanamo has revealed that prisoners were forced to listen to Skinny Puppy music continuously for 6 to 12 hours. According to psychiatrist Stephen Xenakis, this practice may cause a high level of anxiety that can cause post-traumatic stress disorder.

In 2008, many songs of artists like Bruce Springsteen, Eminem, James Taylor, Marilyn Manson, Metallica, Neil Diamond, Pearl Jam and Red Hot Chili Peppers were used as a way of torture, and this has launched a campaign against this method and for the closing of the prison in Guantanamo that Washington created in 2002.

This year, U.S. President Barack Obama repeated his unfulfilled promise of closing the prison, but the Congress keeps blocking the transfer of detainees to American penitentiary centers.

German Students Visit Educational Center in Pinar del Rio

PINAR DEL RIO, Cuba, Feb 6 (acn) The 36 students and professors traveling in the Thor Heyerdahl sailing ship were received on Thursday with Cuban traditional dances and music at the Federico Engels Vocational Pre-university Institute of Exact Sciences in Pinar del Rio.

The program of activities includes sport games and dance lessons.

Yuliet Morejon, a specialist of the Provincial Office of the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP), explained that the project is made up by students from several schools of Germany, and that they are from 14 to 16 years of age.

She added that the trip is a kind of preparatory course for their entry to universities, since during the semester at sea they receive school subjects and work on the ship.

In October, the sailing ship set sail from the city of Kiel, to complete a crossing that includes different regions of the world, and later it will return to a German port in April.