



NADACE FORUM 2000
FORUM 2000 FOUNDATION
Pohořelec 6, 118 00 Praha 1, Czech Republic

tel. +420 224 310 991 | fax +420 224 310 989
secretariat@forum2000.cz
www.forum2000.cz



Deep Concern From 85 Civil Society Organizations as Cuban Government Is Granted a New Seat on UN Human Rights Council

In response to Cuba's election to a fifth term on the Human Rights Council, 85 Cuban and international human rights and freedom-of-expression organizations, in conjunction with independent media outlets, released the following statement:

We are deeply concerned about the decision to grant Cuba a new opportunity to have a seat on the Human Rights Council. This not only rewards Cuba's poor human rights record, but it also undermines the integrity of the Council to hold abusive governments accountable for their actions in the region and across the globe.

Nations with the honor of being part of the Council must be committed to international human rights law. The members of the Council should ensure that Cuba does not avoid responsibility for its own conduct or use its seat to weaken international human rights norms. As organizations dedicated to the protection and advancement of human rights, we will be vigilant, monitoring Cuba's actions within the Council, certifying that human rights and fundamental freedoms are being respected and protected.

Background

On October 13, 2020, at the UN General Assembly, the international community granted a new seat on the Human Rights Council to Cuba. Since its founding in 2006, Cuba has already held one of the eight Human Rights Council seats distributed to Latin America and the Caribbean for four mandates. In Cuba's 12 years on the Council, the country has only supported 66 of the 205 resolutions passed in response to serious human rights violations around the world.

In all three cycles of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), Cuba has received severe warnings about violations of freedom of association and expression, political persecution, arbitrary detentions, prohibitions on free domestic and international travel, absence of judicial independence, censorship, control of the internet, and the scarcity of media plurality. In July 2020, these violations even played out publicly at the Human Rights Council, with the Cuban representative and his allies censoring Cuban human rights defender Ariel Ruiz Urquiola through constant interruptions, as he discussed the crimes done to him and his sister by the Cuban government.

At the global level, Cuba has not ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, or the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Furthermore, the Cuban government has not provided an invitation to the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which visits those imprisoned for crimes of a political nature, has been unsuccessful in accessing the island since 1989. Cuba is also the only country in the Americas that Amnesty International has been unable to visit since 1990.

In Freedom House's [Freedom in the World 2020](#) report, Cuba obtained a score of 14 points out of a possible 100 with respect to civil and political liberties, the lowest in Latin America. In 2019, International IDEA's [The Global State of Democracy 2019](#) report stated that Cuba ranked within the world's bottom 25 percent for civil society participation, and is the only country in the region that has not taken significant steps towards a democratic transition in the last four decades. Classified as an authoritarian regime and ranked 143rd out of the 167 countries and territories featured in the Economist Intelligence Unit's [Democracy Index 2019](#), Cuba has also earned multiple low rankings by a number of human rights and freedom-of-expression organizations. For example, in its most recent report, Human Rights Watch (HRW) highlighted the Cuban government's continued repression and punishment of dissent and public criticism through beatings, public denigration, travel restrictions, and arbitrary firings.

In 2019, The Special Rapporteur for the Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) concluded that "the grave neglect of elements essential to the freedom of expression, representative democracy and its institutions persists" in Cuba. Likewise, in its 2020 report on the human rights situation in Cuba, the IACHR identified a common pattern in the use of arbitrary detention as a method of harassment employed by the police and state security agents. According to organizations including Prisoners Defenders and Observatorio Cubano de Derechos Humanos, there are anywhere from 125 to 138 political prisoners in Cuba as of October 2020.

The country continues to be, year after year, ranked among the worst in Latin America for press freedom, and is ranked 171st out of the 180 countries analyzed in [Reporters Without Borders' \(RSF\) 2020 World Press Freedom](#) index. The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) includes Cuba on a [list of 10 countries with the greatest level of censorship on the planet](#).

Signatories:

1. 14yMedio
2. AC Consorcio, Desarrollo, Justicia
3. ADNCuba
4. Alas Tensas
5. Alianza Democrática Oriental
6. Alianza Regional por la Libre Expresión e Información
7. Árbol Invertido
8. Artículo 19 Oficina para México y Centroamérica
9. Asociación Cubana de Pequeños Emprendedores (ACPE)
10. Asociación Cubana para la Divulgación del Islam
11. Asociación Pro Libertad de Prensa (APLP)
12. Asociación Sindical Independiente de Cuba (ASIC)
13. CADAL
14. Centro Cubano de Derechos Humanos
15. Centro de Justicia y Paz - Cepaz
16. Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW)
17. CIVICUS
18. Civil Rights Defenders
19. Club de Escritores y Artistas de Cuba

20. Colegio de Pedagogos Independientes de Cuba (CPIC)
21. Comité Cubano Pro Derechos Humanos (CCPDH)
22. Comité de Ciudadanos por la Integración Racial
23. Comunidad Judía Sefardita Bnei Anusim de Cuba
24. Confederación Obrera Nacional Independiente de Cuba
25. Corriente Agramontista (agrupación de abogados independientes cubanos)
26. CubaLex
27. CubaNet
28. Cultura Democrática
29. Delibera Organización
30. Demo Amlat
31. Demóngeles
32. Diario de Cuba
33. Editorial Hypermedia
34. Espacio Público (Venezuela)
35. Federación de Estudiantes de Derecho de Venezuela
36. Federación Venezolana de Estudiantes de Ciencias Políticas
37. Foro Penal
38. Forum 2000 Foundation
39. Freedom House
40. Frente Democrático Estudiantil
41. Fundación Ciudadanía y Desarrollo (Ecuador).
42. Fundación Nacional de Estudios Jurídico, Políticos y Sociales
43. Hearts on Venezuela
44. Instar
45. Instituto Cubano por la Libertad de Expresión y Prensa (ICLEP)
46. Instituto La Rosa Blanca
47. Instituto Patmos
48. Instituto Político para la Libertad (IPL)
49. Inventario
50. Justicia, Encuentro y Perdón
51. Juventud Activa Cuba Unida
52. La Hora de Cuba
53. Libertad Cuba Lab
54. Mesa de Diálogo de la Juventud Cubana (MDJC)
55. Ministerio Internacional Apostólico y Profético "Viento Recio"
56. Ministerio Mujer a Mujer
57. Movimiento para la Libertad de Expresión (MOLE)
58. Movimiento San Isidro
59. Museo de la Disidencia en Cuba
60. Observatorio Cubano de Derechos Humanos
61. Observatorio de Libertad Académica (OLA)
62. OtroLunes - Revista Hispanoamericana de Cultura
63. Outreach Aid to the Americas, Inc. (OAA)
64. Palabra Abierta
65. PEN America
66. PEN Argentina
67. PEN Club de Escritores Cubanos en el Exilio
68. PEN Internacional
69. PEN Nicaragua
70. People in Need (PIN)
71. People in Need Slovakia
72. Prisoners Defenders
73. Programa Cuba
74. Programa Venezolano de Educación Acción en Derechos Humanos (Provea)



NADACE FORUM 2000
FORUM 2000 FOUNDATION
Pohořelec 6, 118 00 Praha 1, Czech Republic

tel. +420 224 310 991 | fax +420 224 310 989
secretariat@forum2000.cz
www.forum2000.cz

- 75. Puente a la Vista
- 76. Red Apostólica Internacional Fuego y Dinámica RAIFD
- 77. Red de Cultura Inclusiva
- 78. Red Defensora de la Mujer (REDAMU)
- 79. Red Femenina de Cuba
- 80. Red Latinoamericana y del Caribe por la Democracia (REDLAD)
- 81. Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
- 82. Solidaridad de Trabajadores Cubanos (STC)
- 83. Tremenda Nota
- 84. Un Mundo Sin Mordaza
- 85. Yucabyte