
René González: Solidarity with the Cuban Five must reach Washington

08/09/2014



René González, who is attending the Portuguese Festival of the Communist newspaper **Avante**, stated that his main goal is to fight for the freedom of the other three comrades still incarcerated in U.S. prisons.

René, along with Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González, Ramón Labañino, and Gerardo Hernández, were arrested in the U.S. in September 1998. They were also punished with harsh sentences for warning their country from terrorist actions carried out by Miami mafia.

René and Fernando are already in Cuba after fully serving their sentences, but Ramón, Gerardo, and Antonio are still in prison.

"We won't give up denouncing the injustice that has been committed", said Rene in an exclusive interview with Prensa Latina, the full version of which we are posting here now:

PL: The Cuban Five were arrested nearly 16 years ago in Miami and were punished with harsh sentences. Could you refer to the circumstances under which the trial was conducted?

Rene: The trial was carried out in an atmosphere that could be compared to a Roman circus. A frightening atmosphere of overwhelming propaganda against The Cuban Five, which was orchestrated by journalists secretly paid by the U.S. government. It was held in Miami, which was wrong, as this is the only place in the world where you were unable to get an impartial jury to have a fair trial.

This has been acknowledged by human rights bodies, which said the trial was in violation of all international regulations, including the U.S. Constitution.

PL: What has helped you to stand firmly through all these years?

René: I think it is the morale. Knowing that we had the morale those prosecutors will never have, gave us strength. Besides the justice of what we had been doing. You cannot judge anyone for protecting human life, which is the most valuable asset.

That combination of factors has given us the necessary strength and will continue doing so, plus our formation as a result of our Revolution that taught us a commitment to human dignity.

PL: You and Fernando Gonzalez returned to your country, but three of your comrades are still in prison. What is their legal situation?

Rene: The legal solution rests on the judge to rule about the motion 2255 or habeas corpus that later, if needed, would go all over the winding road from the district court to the Supreme Court.

This is an extrajudicial appeal because all judicial appeals have been lodged already. The process got to the end when the Supreme Court arbitrarily refused to revise it.

What people must know is that this is a case determined by political reasons and its solution will be motivated by the political calculations to be made by the judge and the U.S. government.

Hence the importance we attach to solidarity. We must demand the U.S. government to do justice.

As the case becomes a burden to them and keeping our comrades in prison turns into a heavier burden to them, they will make the right political decision, which is to apply their laws to the 2255 and in this case the comrades will return to Cuba.

PL: Regarding world solidarity, what is your opinion about the fact that so many world figures and movements support the release of The Cuban Five?

René: First, we have to thank all these people for all their solidarity. After hard work for many years the wall of silence of media has been broken and many honest people worldwide have joined the cause of The Cuban Five. We need to boost solidarity, multiply it, and above all, launch it over Washington, over the U.S. establishment that in the end will have to make a decision. And we need all that energy to be focused on them so they make the right decision.

PL: If your attitude has been brave, so has been your family's. I think this has also given you plenty of strength all this time.

Rene: Of course, the family role has been paramount. The wives, the children, our parents and siblings, all have played an important role in this struggle.

They have promoted our cause abroad. We cannot forget that I left prison just a year and a half ago, but for 15 years our relatives fought the political and public battles.

And they have done it well, with great dignity. Every success has been a source of resistance for us. I think they are heroes in this story.

PL-¿How does it feel being back in your country?

René: I feel happy, pleased, honored, also because of the privilege that the Cuban people offer me every time we walk the streets of Havana and they come to us and greet us. I also feel committed to my three brothers that were in fact defending the Cuban people.

PL: ¿What is your mission now?

Rene: My priority is to fight for my three comrades to be released and sent back to Cuba.

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