

---

Code Pink Co Director Says Blockade Must be Lifted Guantanamo Base Returned to Cuba

---

11/02/2015



A group of 148 US solidarity activists organized by the anti war organization Code Pink met on Monday at the Havana headquarters of the Institute of Friendship with the Peoples, ICAP.

Medea Benjamin, co director of Code Pink and co founder of the international human rights organization Global Exchange said that "our work must continue in favor of lifting Washington's over 50 year old blockade, demand for the US Naval Base in Guantanamo to be closed and returned to the Cuban people in compliance with their right to self determination and sovereignty and get Cuba off the list of countries that sponsor international terrorism. How can Cuba be a terrorist country when they are sending doctors all over the world to save lives", said the solidarity activist.

Medea added that Cuba has worked in favor of its people and has become a model for the rest of the poor nations in the world, while the US has demonstrated that their model does not work while attempting to impose their mandates to others.

ICAP President Kenia Serrano said she welcomes the group to Cuba with love and thanked them for standing on "our side all these years in the struggle to end the blockade". She stressed that in 1961 when the US government was breaking diplomatic relations with Cuba there was a US delegation on the island at the time who donated blood in case of a military confrontation with the Caribbean island and today, said Kenia, while we are in the process of reestablishing diplomatic ties, we are welcoming a group of friends from the US that are supporting our right to self determination to freely choose our own destiny. Our peoples said the President of the Friendship Institute are united throughout history.

She added that this has been the largest US group that ICAP has welcomed this year bringing with them a powerful solidarity message.

Kenia thanked Code Pink for their work in favor of lifting Washington's economic, financial and commercial

blockade against the Cuban people. She also thanked the groups' opposition to the illegally occupied US Naval Base in Guantanamo and prison used as a torture camp which goes against the values of the American people.

Also participating in the morning activity were Ricardo Alarcon, former Cuban Parliament President; Jodie Evans, co founder of Code Pink; Ann Wright, former US Army Colonel and Retired US State Department official; Lisa Valenti solidarity activist and former national President of the US-Cuba Sister Cities Association; Shahid Buttar Executive Director of the Bill of Rights Defense Committee; Marsha Coleman-Abedayo, coordinator of the DC based Hands-Up Coalition and Tara Thompson; leader of Black Lives Matter protests in Ferguson, Missouri among others.

The solidarity activists organized by Code Pink will carry out a program of activities to learn about the reality of the Cuban people.

---