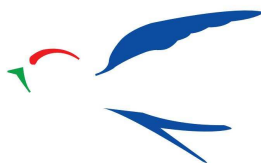




weydingerstr. 14-16 10178 berlin
tel.: +49 (0)30 - 24 00 93 38
e-mail: info@netzwerk-cuba.de
internet: www.netzwerk-cuba.de
konto: 32 33 01 04
postbank berlin (BLZ: 100 100 10)

To:

Republic of ITALY
The Presidency of the Council of the EU
and other decisionmakers of the EU and member countries



June 22, 2014

Dear Prime Minister Matteo Renzi,
dear Foreign Minister Federica Mogherini,
dear Excellency Catherine Ashton,
dear excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

We citizens engaged in friendship and solidarity work for Cuba with our national organisations in many European countries, address this letter to you due to your upcoming position as Head of the Council of the European Union.

As you know, more than 53 years ago the U.S. administration started its blockade against Cuba, 18 years ago the U.S. administration hardened the blockade laws, 12 years ago the U.S. administration established a prison-camp at occupied Guantanamo Bay on sovereign Cuban territory containing for years more than 700 human beings and practiced torture. For more than 55 years the U.S. administrations have been trying to topple the legitimate Cuban government and the political system which the Cubans have chosen and created for themselves.

For 18 years now the EU has followed the "Common Position of the EU on Cuba" which functions in fact as a mere complement to the Cold War strategy of the U.S. administration against Cuba, runs counter to principles of international law, violates the sovereignty of the Cuban people, and brings hardship to the people.

More and more citizens in the EU find that Position unacceptable. We in Europe should act more fairly and be more future-oriented and constructive towards Cuba. We are looking forward to you as our representative taking steps in this direction.

We regard the almost unanimous votes at the UN General Assembly against the US-blockade (including all member governments of the EU) every year as a positive symbol and an important message. But we also recognize that within the EU this vote has so far led to limited practical results, so that the EU is reconsidering its position to Cuba. Therefore it is high time for the EU as a whole to go from word to action and overcome the Common Position completely. A change is necessary as well as

urgent because of the increasing negative effects of the US-blockade on banks and financial transfers in the EU. It is unacceptable that more and more economic activities are controlled by the USA – through NSA, CIA, and OFAC (U.S. Finance ministry).

We therefore urge you to prepare and organise the immediate cancellation of the counterproductive "Common Position of the EU on Cuba". It is long overdue to lift this un-diplomatic approach which violates international principles like that of self-determination.

We, active citizens and civil society organizations from all over Europe urge you to intensify fair contacts and respectful cooperation with Cuba, and we would be pleased to see you taking such initiatives. Pressing issues like climate change, desertification, biodiversity, fair trade, MDGs and SDGs, technology transfer, etc. are currently dealt with far below the urgently needed level of cooperation required.

Yours Sincerely,

- AUSTRIA: *Michael Wögerer* (President), Österreichisch-Kubanische Gesellschaft and *Prof. Albrecht Konecny* (President of the Board of Trustees)
- BELGIUM: *Alexandra Dirckx*, Voorzitter Vrienden van Cuba and President Amis de Cuba; and *Katrien Demuynck*, Iniciativa Cuba Socialista – Belgium
- BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA: *Sead Halilovic* (President), Association of the Bosnian and Herzegovinian-Cuban Friendship
- CZECH REPUBLIC: *Ludvik SULDA* (President), Czech-Cuban Friendship Society
- DENMARK: *Helene Caprani* (President), Association Denmark – Cuba
- FRANCE: *Jacques Milhas*, Pour Cuba Si France
- GERMANY: *Harri Grünberg* (President), Netzwerk Cuba e.V. (42 member groups); and Alexander-von-Humboldt-Gesellschaft e.V.
- GREECE: *Nikos Karandreas* (President) Greek Cuban Friendship and Solidarity Association; *Despina Markou* (President) Greek Committee for International Democratic Solidarity
- ITALIA: *Sergio Marinoni* (President), Associazione Nazionale di Amicizia Italia-Cuba
- IRELAND: *Simon McGuinness* (National Coordinator), Cuba Support Group
- LUXEMBURG: *Joël Wunsch* (President), Amistad Luxemburgo-Cuba
- MALTA: *Michael Camilleri* (President) and *Mario Mifsud* (Secretary) Malta Cuba Society
- NORWAY: *Terje Enger*, Cubaforeningen
- PORTUGAL: *Armanda C. Fonseca*, Associcao Portugal-Cuba
- ROMANIA: *Vasile Orleanu* (President) Fundatia AVANGARDA; and *Prof. Gheorghe Ungureanu* (President) Association "Fidel Castro"
- SERBIA: *Prof. Ljiljana Bogoeva Sedlar* (President) Serbian-Cuban Association
- SLOVENIA: *Igor JURIŠIČ* (President) Slovene - Cuban friendship association
- SPAIN: *Paco Calderon*, SODEPAZ and Coordinadora Estatal de Solidaridad con Cuba – Madrid
- SWEDEN: *Martin Österlin* (President), Swedish-Cuban Association
- UNITED KINGDOM: *Rob Miller* (Director) and *Bernard Regan* (Secretary) Cuba Solidarity Campaign