



ECR Group statement on demonstrations for freedom and democracy in Cuba

The European Conservatives and Reformists Group is greatly concerned with the violent response of the Cuban regime to the peaceful demonstrations that are taking place in Cuba against the communist government, demanding the end of more than sixty years dictatorship in the island.

It was an unprecedented display of anger and frustration in many cities throughout the country, including the Island's biggest: Havana, Santiago, Santa Clara, Matanzas, Cienfuegos and Holgin.

Cuba, which was one of the most prosperous countries in America sixty years ago, is today a bankrupt state, with most of its population living in absolute poverty due to an undemocratic and corrupt communist rule.

The ECR Group strongly condemns the violent response of Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel to this peaceful movement and expresses its support and commitment to the Cuban people, and for freedom and democracy in Cuba and in all countries of Latin America which today are under growing threat from movements that do not respect the rule of law.

We therefore call on the European Union to reconsider its position on Cuba and to start working firmly and with perseverance towards a strong defence of the values of freedom, the rule of law and democracy.

In this regard, the ECR Group recalls the **European Parliament Resolution of 19 September 2019 (1)** condemning the horrible crimes committed by communists throughout Europe without exception, and condemning acts of aggression, crimes against humanity and massive human rights violations perpetrated by communist, Nazi and other authoritarian regimes.

Moreover, the ECR Group urges the Cuban authorities to:

- Release all detainees, including ABC journalist Camila Acosta, immediately;
- Immediately cease all violence, persecution, harassment, arbitrary detentions and continued attacks against peaceful demonstrators such as the San Isidro Movement, independent journalists, human rights defenders and members of the peaceful opposition in Cuba;
- Allow unrestricted entry and access of Members of the European Parliament to Cuba.

Furthermore, we call on the European Union to:

- Strongly condemn this latest wave of repressions by the Cuban authorities against the largest demonstration of the civilian population in the last 30 years;
- Instruct the Delegation of the European Union to Cuba to render all possible assistance to people persecuted by the regime;
- Convene an urgent meeting with the Cuban authorities as a 'case of special urgency' in accordance with the provisions of Article 85 of the PDCA so that, in light of the facts and the repeated systematic violation of the obligations and commitments agreed upon in the Agreement, the EU immediately applies the suspension mechanism provided for in the Agreement;
- Immediately cease all financial aid from the EU to Cuba, which has been consistently rendered despite the past and present serious violations of human rights.

Yours,

Hermann Tertsch, President of the Policy Group ECR Eurolat

Anna Fotyga, Vice-President of the Policy Group ECR Eurolat

Charlie Weimers, Vice-President of the Policy Group ECR Eurolat

Carlo Fidanza, Vice-President of the Policy Group ECR Eurolat