

Argentina

ADOLFO PEREZ ESQUIVEL

Nobel Prize Winner

Guatemala

RIGOBERTA MENCHU

Nobel Peace Prize

France

DANIELLE MITTERAND

Fund. France- Libertés

Germany

HERTA DAUBLER-GMELIN

Member of Parliament

Nicaragua

MIGUEL D' ESCOTO

BROCKMANN, Pres. Pro Tempore

U.N. National Assembly

Chile

Judge JUAN GUZMAN TAPIA

A. Pinochet case

Egypt

SAMIR AMIN

Alternative Pres. World Forum

Bolivia

LOYOLA GUZMAN

Member of Nat' Assembly

United States

THOMAS GUMBLETON

Former Bishop, Detroit

REV. JOAN BROWN CAMPBELL

Former Pres. of Council of

Churches

Spain

MANUEL BONMATI, Gral Secr. of

Workers Union (UGT)

Marcos Ana, Poet and Writer

México

Pablo González Casanova

Sociologist and Writer

Paraguay

Martín Almada

Alternative Nobel Prize 2002

Puerto Rico

Rafael Cancel Miranda

Independentista Leader

South Africa

MICHAEL LAPSLEY

Inst. Rec. Of Memories

Venezuela

MARIA LEON - President of

National Institute of Women



International Commission for the Rights of Family Visits

P.O. Box 22455, Oakland, Ca, 94609, United States

March 8, 2009

**U.S. Justice Department
Mr. Eric Holder**

**c/c United Nation Human Right Commission
Rapporteur Against Torture
Amnesty International
Ombudsman**

Dear Mr. Holder:

We, the undersigned of this letter, respectfully request the US Department of State, the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security to immediately grant **Humanitarian VISAS** to the Cuban citizens **Olga Salanueva** and **Adriana Pérez**, wives of federal prisoners René González and Gerardo Hernández respectively, whom, without any legal reasons, have been prevented from visiting their imprisoned husbands for 9 and 10 years.

We are aware that those two women have applied for visas on 9 different occasions. In each occasion, the State Department denied their request based on different arguments each time, without showing any legal basis that justified the arbitrariness of such a measure.

Amnesty International has denounced this situation on several occasions since the year 2003 reminding you that:

Article 10 (1) of The United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights that the United States has ratified: "All persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person" "4. Treating all persons deprived of their liberty with humanity and with respect for their dignity is a fundamental and universally applicable....This rule must be applied without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status." On January 17, 2007 Amnesty International once again denounced the rights violations of these prisoners to receive visits from their wives as "**an unnecessary punishment**"

We also want to remind you that on May 27, 2005 the United Nations Group on Arbitrary Detention made public an opinion declaring the detention of these persons as "**illegal and arbitrary**" and asked the US government to put an end to that situation, arguing the legal violations that they suffered and the lack of legal guarantees to a fair and impartial trial. Among other things they declared: "**this is contrary to the Art 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**"

In addition, on August 9th of the same year three judges of the Atlanta Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals revoked their sentences and asked for a new trial.

Currently, this case internationally known as “the Cuban Five” is in the process of appeals before the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Cuban Five were arrested on September 12, 1998. Since then the lack of regular family visits for these men have been an additional punishment. We know that the U.S. penitentiary system allows family visits several times per month, according to a particular prison’s rules. In the ten years that they have been incarcerated, these rules were never granted to family members of the Cuban Five.

The visas given to the mothers, wives and children of Ramón Labañino, Fernando González and Antonio Guerrero, have been arbitrarily delayed for periods of up to a year and a half in all cases.

In the cases of Gerardo Hernández and René González the rights of family visits have been violated. To deny these prisoners the right to be visit by their wives has become, with the passing of time, another form of torture and cruelty.

We ask you to put an end to this situation and to grant immediate **HUMANITARIAN VISAS** to **OLGA SALANUEVA** and **ADRIANA PÉREZ** and **MULTIPLE VISAS TO ALL FAMILY MEMBERS**

Sincerely,

Father François Houtart, Priest and sociologist, Director of the Centre Tricontinental, Belgium, Venezuela, Bolivia, **Eloi Glorieux**, Member of the Flemish Parliament, **Alfredo Vera Arrata**, Former Ministry of Education, Writer and Journalist, Ecuador, Egypt, **Sami Naïr**, Sociologist, Philosopher, France, **Hildebrando Pérez Grande**, Poet and Writer, Casa de las Américas Prize, Peru **Marco Rizzo**, Member of the European Parliament, member of the RREE Comm. of the PE, Italy, **Pablo González Casanova**, Sociologist, 2003 UNESCO International Prize José Martí, Mexico, **Istvan Meszáros**, Philosopher, writer, Hungry, **Fahter Miguel D’escoto Brockmann**, Foreign Affairs Former Minister, Catholic Priest, Nicaragua; **Marco Martos Carrera**, President of the Peruvian Academy of Language, Peru, **Manuel Bonmati**, International Policies Secretary of the General Workers Union (UGT), Spain, **Joseba Echevarría**, Secretary of the International Commission of the General Workers Union (UGT), Spain; **Alfonso Sastre**, Dramaturge, Spain; **Howard Zinn**, Historian, United States; **Alice Walker**, Writer, United States; **Deputy Víctor Chirinos**, Pte. Of the Venezuelan Parliamentary Group of the Latin American Parliament and Vice-president of the Latina American Parliament; **Elmar Rojas**, Former Culture Minister, Guatemala; **Noam Chomsky**, Linguist and Writer, United States; **Reverend Dr. Joan Brown Campbell**, Former General Secretary of the National Council of Churches, United States; **Michael Parenti**, Ph.D., author and scholar, United States; **Eloi Glorieaux**, Member of Flemish Parliament; **Ignacio Ramonet**, Journalist and Writer, Spain, France; **Deputy Emil Guevara Muñoz**, Latin American Parliament Deputy and Coordinator of the National Movement of Friendship and Mutual Solidarity Venezuela-Cuba, Venezuela; **Demir Rafael Chávez González**, Adviser Minister of the Embassy of Bolivia in Cuba; **Diputado Amilcar Figueroa**, Latin American Parliament Alternate President, Venezuela; **Beinusz Szmukler**, President of the Associations of Buenos Aires Lawyers (AABA), Argentina; **Eva-Britt Svensson**, European Parliament, Sweden; **Salvador Sánchez Cerén**, Nacional Deputy, El Salvador; **Cuauhtémoc Amescua Dromundo**, Deputy, professor of Political Sciences in the Autonomous University of Mexico, Mexico; **Father Benjamin Forcano**, **Danny Rivera**, Puerto Rico, Musician, Founder of the International School of Plastic Arts and Music, Theologian and Priest; **Estella Carlotto**, President of Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo, Argentina; **Hebe de Bonafini**, President of Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, Argentina; **Nora Cortiñas**, President of Mothers of Plaza de Mayo-Línea Fundadora, Argentina; **Stella Calloni**, Journalist and Writer, Argentina; **Fray Antonio Puigjané**, Franciscan Priest of the Cappuccinos Order, Argentina; **Fhater Raúl Lugo Rodríguez**, Catholic Priest, México; **Kurt De Loor**, Member of the Flemish Parliament, Belgium; **Atilio Borón**, Sociologist, Member of the International Directory of the Council of Social Sciences at the UNESCO,

Argentina; **Rafael Chávez**, Consul of Bolivia in Cuba, Bolivia; **Khaled Salama**, Member of the National Palestinian Council, Palestina; **Rosario Valenzuela Sotomayor**, Writer, Bolivia; **Bart Staes**, Member of the European Parliament; **Deputy Marelis Pérez Marcano**, National Assembly, Nacional, Venezuela; **Antonio Peredo Leigue**, Senador Nacional, Bolivia; **Emir Sader**, Executive Secretary CLACSO (Latin American Social Sciences Council, Brazil; **Marilia Guimarães**, Writer, Member of the Brazilian Chapter on Defense of Humanity, Brazil; **William Sloan**, President of the Association of American Jurists (Canada branch), Canada; **Arnold August**, Author, Canada; **James Cockcroft**, Author, Canada; **David Suzuki**, President The David Suzuki Foundation, 1976 Order of Canada Officer, Canada; **Father Ernesto Cardenal**, Catholic Priest and Writer, Nicaragua; **Hugo Gutierrez**, Human Rights lawyer, (Pinochet case), Arcis Law School professor, Chile; **Pablo Guyasamin Monteverde**, President Guayasamin Foundation, Ecuador; **Marco Antonio Toscano Arroyo**, University Professor of Administrative Science, Ecuador; **Dax Toscano Segovia**, University Professor and Journalist, Ecuador; **Juan Carranza**, Jurist, El Salvador; **Leonel González**, Professor, FMLN Deputy, El Salvador; **Roland Weil**, Jurist, France; **Ramon Chao**, Journalist, Writer, France; **Hernando Calvo Ospina**, Journalist, Writer, France; **Salim Lamrani**, Professor, Writer and Journalist, France; **Günter Belchus**, Jurist, former Assessor of the German Democratic Republic Ministry of Justice, Germany; **Father Geoffrey Bottoms**, Catholic Priest, Great Britain; **István Meszáros**, Philosopher and writer, Hungary; **Domenico Losurdo**, Philosopher, Italy; **Matteo Carbonelli**, General Secretary of the "Legal Union per la Tutela dei Diritti dell'Uomo", Professor of International Rights, Italy; **Bianca Pitzorno**, Writer, Italy; **Gilberto López y Rivas**, Professor-Researcher of the National Institute of History and Anthropology, Article writer of *La Jornada*, Mexico; **Hilda Venegas Negrete**, Vice-president of the National Network of Leftist Lawyers of Mexico, President of the AC Women for Democracy, Mexico; **Cuaúhtemoc Amezcua Dromundo**, ex member of Congress, Professor of Political Science at the Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), Author, Mexico; **Luis Hernández Navarro**, Opinion Co-editor of "La Jornada" newspaper, México; **Father Raul Lugo Rodriguez**, Catholic Priest, Mexico; **Father Uriel Molina**, Catholic Priest, Nicaragua; **Martín Almada**, Jurist, Alternative Nobel Prize, 2002, Paraguay; **Hidelbrando Pérez Grande**, Poet and Writer Casa de las Américas Prize, Peru; **Gustavo Espinoza**, Former Congressman of Peru, former General Secretary of the Central of Peruvians Workers, Peru; **Rafael Cancel Miranda**, Latin American patriots, Independentist leader and Poet (imprisoned for 25 years) , Puerto Rico; **Pablo Marcano Garcia**, Puerto Rico painter; **Gervasio Morales Rodríguez**, Director of the Porto Rican Weekly "Claridad" , Puerto Rico; **Javier Sádaba**, Philosopher, Spain; **Belen Gopegui**, Writer, Spain; **Sixto Sánchez Lorenzo**, Professor of International Private Law at the University of Granada, Spain; **Manuel Talens**, Writer, Spain; **Carlos Martínez**, Editor of "Rebellion", Spain; **Santiago Alba Rico**, Writer, Spain; **Juan Madrid**, Novelist, Historian, Movie Director, Spain; **Juan Kalvellido**, Cartoonist and Drawer, Spain; **Bishop Thomas Gumbleton**, Former Bishop of Detroit, United States; **Danny Glover**, Actor, United States; **Esteban Torres**, Former US Congressman, United States; **Wayne Smith**, Former Chief of the US Interests Section in Havana, Cuba, United States; **Gayle McLaughlin**, Mayor of Richmond, CA, United States; **Angela Davis**, Professor of History of Consciousness, University of California, Santa Cruz, United States; **Alicia Herrera**, Journalist and Writer, Venezuela; **Lic. Stella Lugo de Montilla**, First Lady of the Falcon State and President of the Council of First Bolivarian Ladies of the State, Venezuela; **Paul Bekaert**, Member of the Board of the Human Rights League and President of the Bruges Lawyers Association, Belgium; **Demir Rafael Chavez Gonzalez**, Diplomat, **Glenys Kinnock**, Member of the European Parliament, England; **István Meszáros**, Philosopher and Writer, Hungary; **Pedro Goldfarb**, Professor Hebrew University, Member of the Kibutz itzjak, Israel; **Andres Sopena Monsalve**, Writer, Professor of International Private Law of the Granada University, Spain; **Joseba Echevarria**, Coordinator of the International Commission of the General Union of Workers (UGT) Spain; **Rosa Regás**, Writer, Planeta Award 2001, Award of the Association of Foreign Press Correspondents 2005, Chevalier Order from the Legion d'Honneur of France, Spain; **Ignasi Guardans**, Member of the European Parliament; Spain, **Graciela Roseblum**, President of the League for the Right of the Persons; **Carlos Zamorano**, Jurist, Secretary of the Association of Human Rights of Bs.As, Argentina; **León Rozichtner**, Philosopher and Writer, Konex Prize, 2004, Argentina; **Senator Yeidckole Polevnsky Gurwitz**, Vice President of the Mexican Senate, Mexico; **Yury Kochiyama**, long time fighter for Civil Rights, Japan, United States.