

Canadian Network on Cuba Statement Jointly with La Table de Concertation de Solidarité Québec-Cuba
July 7, 2008

On the initiative of **Francine Lalonde**, Bloc Québécois MP for La Pointe-de-l'Île and Foreign Affairs critic, 56 Members of Parliament signed a letter demanding justice for the Five Cubans imprisoned in the United States and for their families. In a good collaborative gesture with the Bloc Québécois, **Libby Davies**, MP for Vancouver East, organized the letter signing within the New Democratic Party.

The letter explaining the case of the Five was signed by 40 Bloc Québécois and 16 New Democratic Party MPs. During the week of June 23-27, 2008 the letter was forwarded to the Honourable **David Emerson**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada with copy to Mr. **Michael Mukasey**,

Attorney General of the United States, and Mr.

David Wilkins

, Ambassador of the United States to Canada.

The letter indicates that

Fernando González Llort, René González Sehwerert, Antonio Guerrero Rodríguez, Gerardo Hernández Nordelo and Ramón Labañino Salazar

, known internationally as the "Five" and imprisoned in the United States for more than 9 years, have undergone an unfair trial and conditions of detention which contravene the Constitution of the United States and international law.

The letter signed by 56 MPs hinges, *inter alia*, on **Amnesty International**, on the **United Nations Working Group**

on arbitrary detentions, which stems from the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, and also on a group of

110 British members of Parliament

who denounced the conditions of the trial and the imprisonment. The letter also mentions that these five people are held in five separate maximum security prisons and are kept for long periods in isolation cells; two of them have been denied their right to family visits. It also states that, since the

Atlanta Court of Appeal

declared that the verdicts against the Cuban Five were invalid, nothing justifies their imprisonment any longer or the arbitrary situation that is extremely painful for the Cuban Five and their families.

In 1998 the Cuban government had given to the American authorities a thick report which showed that **terrorist acts were being plotted on American soil** by anti-Cuba groups living primarily in Miami. The information was gathered largely from data collected by the Cuban Five who had infiltrated these groups; but rather than acting on this information, it was the Cuban Five who were arrested on September 12, 1998.

Other members of Parliament in the world have denounced the injustice made against the Five and their families, such as **Karel De Gucht**, Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, who made a statement last June 30th.

In Québec, in addition to many ordinary citizens, well-known personalities such as **Claudette Carboneau**

, president of the CSN,

Elsie Lefebvre

, Bloc Québécois Party former MP as well as 93 personalities gave their support to the Five. In Canada, Ms.

Libby Davies

, NDP MP for Vancouver East, gathered signatures of other MPs from her party. The support of the NDP MPs for the Five is added to that of the

Labour Congress of Canada

and the

Canadian Federation of Students

, among others.

In October 2007 Ms. Francine Lalonde met in her office of Pointe-aux-Trembles, with Ms.

Elizabeth

Palmeiro

, wife of Ramón Labañino, one of the Five.

Canadian Network on Cuba

Working in friendship and solidarity with [Cuba](#)

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The Canadian Network on Cuba was founded on September 2, 2002 by representatives of Canada-Cuba solidarity organizations, trade unions, NGOs, and political parties.

The Canadian Network on
Cuba

and the Table de concertation de solidarité Québec-Cuba support fully the Bloc Québécois and the New Democratic Party in this joint call for justice and add our voices to those of our MPs.

We will continue in our joint efforts to bring justice for the Five by making their case known to the public of Québec and

Canada

and also in collaboration with other justice seeking organizations in the United States

and elsewhere in the world.

We demand justice for the Five and their families!

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