



Media Advisory #5 - Support Mounting for the Cuban Five Imprisoned in the United States

August 21, 2012

TORONTO - Support for the release of the Cuban Five is growing and the Peoples' Tribunal and Assembly for Justice for the Five, to be held in Toronto on September 21-23, 2012, is based on the shoulders of that support. Hundreds of thousands of people and organizations around the world have expressed their support for freedom for the Five or have raised serious questions about the legal process that placed them in prison. Some of the most renowned personalities and organizations are: **Alice Walker**, poet and author; **Danny Glover**, actor and chair of the TransAfrica Forum; **Wayne Smith**, chief of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana during the Jimmy Carter administration; **Catholic Bishop of Detroit Thomas Gumbleton**; **British Catholic priest Geoffrey Bottoms**; **Esteban Torres**, former U.S. Congressman; **Noam Chomsky**, world renowned author; **Rev. Joan Brown Campbell** former President of the National Council of Churches; **Howard Zinn**, historian; Chilean judge, **Juan Guzmán**, involved in the legal process against Augusto Pinochet. **Forty Bloc Québécois deputies and sixteen NDP Members of Parliament in Canada sent a letter on December 12, 2007 to Canada's Foreign Minister speaking out in favour of the Cuban Five; on February 8, 2007, 110 Members of the U.K. Parliament demanded of the U.S. Attorney to free the Five. Amnesty International expressed concern about the Five's imprisonment; the Working Group on Arbitrary Detentions of the U.N. Human Rights Commission declared the Five's imprisonment as "arbitrary" and violated international law. The Canadian Federation of Students, Canadian trade unions and Ken Georgetti, President of the Canadian Labour Congress, on behalf of 3.3 million workers, have all taken stands against the imprisonment of the Cuban Five.**

Nobel Prize winners wrote to the U.S. Attorney General in calling for freedom for the Five: Zhores Alfaro (physics, 2000); Desmond Tutu (Peace, 1984); Nadine Gordimer (Literature, 1991); Rigoberta Menchú (Peace, 1992); Adolfo Pérez Esquivel (Peace, 1980); Wole Soyinka, Literature, 1986); José Saramago (Literature, 1998); Günter Grass (Literature, 1999). Their letter was also signed by 6,000 intellectuals and artists including Oscar Neimeyer, Mario Benedetti (now deceased); Harry Belafonte, Ernesto Cardenal, Eduardo Galeano, Frei Betto, Tariq Ali, and Ramsay Clark.

The following actors signed on to a letter to President Obama encouraging him to issue an Executive Clemency Order on behalf of the Five: Ed Asner of Mary Tyler Moore fame; Jackson Browne, singer, songwriter and member of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame; Ry Cooder, multi-Grammy award-winning guitarist, producer of the Buena Vista Social Club; James Cromwell, TV actor from "LA Confidential" and "Six Feet Under"; Mike Farrell from "M*A*S*H"; Elliott Gould from "M*A*S*H" and "Oceans Eleven"; Chrissie Hynde, member of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame; Greg Landau, three-time Grammy award nominee; Francisco Letelier, Chilean-born muralist whose father, Orlando, was assassinated in Washington in 1976; Graham Nash of Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young; Bonnie Raitt, multi-Grammy award-winner; Susan Sarandon, actor in "Thelma and Louise"; Pete Seeger, iconic legendary folk singer; Martin Sheen of "The West Wing" TV series; Oliver Stone, Academy Award-winning director of "Platoon" and "Fourth of July"; and Haskell Wexler, recipient of two Oscars for "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" and "Bound For Glory".

The Peoples' Tribunal and Assembly welcomes the many supporters who will participate and attend, including Danny Glover, Cindy Sheehan and Saul Landau. Strong trade union participation representing millions of workers from the U.K. and Canada, as personified in Tony Woodley, Unite the Union; Denis Lemelin, Canadian Union of Postal Workers; Ken Neumann, United Steelworkers; Wayne Hanley, United Food and Commercial Workers; Paul Moist, Canadian Union of Public Employees; and Marie Clark Walker from the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists is a huge support. The representatives of various solidarity groups

beginning with Alicia Jrapko of the International Committee for the Cuban Five; Gloria La Riva, of the National Committee to Free the Five both based in the U.S.; the Canadian Network on Cuba; the Canadian Cuban Friendship Association, the Table de concertation et de solidarité Québec-Cuba; the Worker to Worker, Canada-Cuba Labour Solidarity Network; Toronto Forum on Cuba; the Communist Party of Canada; International Council of Latin American and Caribbean Women of Canada -*Latin@s*; representatives of different religious denominations such as Father Hernan Astudillo; members of the legal profession such as William Sloan from Montreal; José Pertierra from Washington, D.C.; Richard Klugh of the legal team defending the Cuban Five; Juan Carranza from Toronto; Rodolfo Dávalos from Havana, Cuba; journalists and writers such as Keith Bolender, Phil Taylor, Arnold August, Nchamah Miller, Julian Rivas, Stephen Kimber, Dr. James Cockroft and native activist and speaker Wes Elliott from Six Nations of the Grand River, show a broadly based commitment to work together for justice for the Five.

The presence of two wives of the Cuban Five, Adriana Pérez and Elizabeth Palmeiro; Dr. Raymundo Navarro Fernandez, member of the CTC National Secretariat and Deputy at Cuba's National Assembly of Peoples' Power; Milexys Guisado Faez, representative from Cuba's National Union of Public Sector Workers (SNTAP) and Abelardo Paisan Reyes, representative of Cuba's National Union of Education Workers (SNTECD); and Livio Di Celmo, brother of Canadian resident Fabio Di Celmo who was killed in a bomb explosion set by U.S.-sponsored terrorists in Havana's Copacabana Hotel, ensures a profound and poignant scenario of fact, decision-making and determination to pressure the U.S. President to do the right thing: Release the Cuban Five.

The public is invited to attend the Tribunal and Assembly sessions on September 22 and 23, 2012.

A media conference with all the participants will be held at Metro Hall, 55 John Street, Room 303, Toronto, on Friday, September 21, at 11:00 a.m. Individual interviews may be scheduled after that.

The opening for the event will take place on Friday, September 21, at 7:00 p.m. at the Steelworkers Hall at 25 Cecil Street, Toronto.

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Previous media advisories are available upon request and can be accessed at: www.freethe5peopletribunal.org:

- #1. with 3 attachments: Call to the Peoples' Tribunal and Assembly for Justice for the Five, background information on the case; Canada's connection with the Cuban Five;
- #2. Danny Glover, Cindy Sheehan, Saul Landau and others coming to Toronto
- #3. Participation from Cuba in the Peoples' Tribunal
- #4. Participants from the U.K., Canada, and the United States in the Peoples' Tribunal and Assembly
- #5. Support mounting for the Cuban Five