

Independent media and organisations call on the Cuban government to respect the right to demonstrate and freedom of expression and to stop violence against demonstrators.

(AUTOMATICALLY TRANSLATED FROM [THE ORIGINAL IN SPANISH](#))

Tuesday 13 July 2021 - The undersigned organisations condemn the Cuban government's repression of the citizen protests registered since 11 July 2021 and which continue to take place to date. We also make an urgent call to the administration presided over by Miguel Díaz-Canel to stop all acts of violence and violations of the human rights of citizens, through the use of force, police repression and the call for confrontation between Cubans.

Cuba is going through a [profound health, economic and political crisis](#). During the days of Sunday and Monday, the streets complained to the government about the lack of individual freedoms, the insufficient medical services to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic, the havoc wreaked on family economies by the monetary order, food shortages, power cuts, and the recurrent violence of the security forces against any expression of discontent by the citizenry. Mass mobilisations occurred in at least [58 different locations](#).

In response to the demonstrations, elements of the National Revolutionary Police, the Riot Squads, and the Department of State Security carried out arbitrary arrests and physical attacks against people who were demonstrating peacefully, including university students. Similarly, people from different independent media and activists¹ denounced the installation of security devices around their homes to prevent them from going out on the streets, a practice that the Cuban authorities have previously adopted as a tactic of intimidation. It is important to mention that international [civil society organisations](#), activists and journalists present at the demonstrations or following them remotely reported cuts in internet service, social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and instant messaging applications, which were also reported [on 12 July](#).

For his part, President Miguel Díaz-Canel [called on](#) supporters of the ruling party to take to the streets to confront the protesters, making a clear incitement to violence: "That is why we are calling on all revolutionaries in our country, all communists, to take to the streets in any of the places where these provocations are going to take place today, from now on and throughout these days".

After the message, [pro-Cuban government groups](#) came out to attack and beat the demonstrators.

Among the violations registered by human rights organisations, the following stand out: acts against the physical and psychological integrity of persons, legal security, the right to assembly, freedom of expression, access to information, personal freedom and the right to defend human rights. To date, several of the signatory organisations have registered dozens

¹ Héctor Valdés Cocho, Luz Escobar, Tania Bruguera, Kirenia Yalit Nuñez

of people detained and/or disappeared at the hands of agents of the National Revolutionary Police and State Security, including minors, among the hundreds of detentions that we estimate to have occurred, a figure that has not been determined due to the cuts to internet service in the country, keeping the violated people in various areas incommunicado.

It is important to note that journalists covering the demonstration were assaulted, among them the Associated Press (AP) photojournalist Ramón Espinosa². Others, whose information is being documented, have not been located, such as the director of Hora de Cuba, Henry Constantín, Iris Mariño García, Neife Rigau and Orelvys Cabrera Sotolongo, Rolando Rodríguez Lobaina, Niober García or were detained, such as the director of Tremenda Nota, Maykel González Vivero. In addition, the arbitrary detention of journalist Camila Acosta, who is the Cuban correspondent of the Spanish daily ABC and also contributes to Cubanet News, was also recorded today.

The undersigned organisations have registered the growing social unrest that the lack of openness to dialogue, the punitive spirit of the Cuban authorities in their interaction with citizens and the constant harassment of civil society and independent media have provoked. In this context, [the Cuban government has accused](#) activists and journalists of being part of a destabilisation plan aimed at undermining the legitimacy of the demands expressed in the various protests of today and years ago.

We therefore call on the Cuban government, headed by Miguel Díaz Canel, to refrain from continuing to violate the rights of critics, to incite confrontation and violence between people with positions that diverge from the official position, and to guarantee the integrity of people who are legitimately exercising their right to demonstrate.

Likewise, we once again call on the international community, especially the embassies of the European Union and the special rapporteurs of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the United Nations (UN), as well as the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, to speak out in favour of the rights of Cuban citizens, and to call for democratisation through genuine dialogue as the only way to bring about change in the country.

Organizations:

Acción Constitucional
Amnistía Internacional
Alianza Regional por la Libre Expresión e Información
ARTICLE 19
Artists at Risk Connection
Asociación Pro Libertad de Prensa (APLP)
Aula Abierta
CADAL

² [\(7\) Facebook](#)

Civil Rights Defenders
CUBALEX
Cuido60
Cultura Democrática
Defiende Venezuela
DemoAmlat
EXTITUTO
Freedom House
Freemuse
Fundación Artemisas
Fundación Ciudadanía y Desarrollo
Fundamedios
Gobierno y Análisis Político A.C.
IFEX-ALC
Instituto sobre Raza, Igualdad y Derechos Humanos
Movimiento San Isidro
Red Latinoamericana de Jóvenes por la Democracia (Juventud LAC)
Observatorio de Libertad Académica (OLA)
PEN América
PEN Cubanos en el exilio
PEN International
People in Need
Prisoners Defenders
Programa Cuba
Programa Venezolano de Educación-Acción en Derechos Humanos (Provea)
Voces del Sur

Independent media:

ADN Cuba
Alas Tensas
Árbol Invertido
CiberCuba
Cubanet News
Diario de Cuba
El Estornudo
Play-Off Magazine
Proyecto Inventario
Rialta

