



TRADE UNIONS FOR CUBA



Trade unions lead campaign for Miami 5



Mothers of the Miami 5 at vigil

Over 30 leading trade unionists and politicians signed a letter calling on President Obama to allow René González, one of the Miami Five, to be allowed to return home to Cuba following his release from US jail.

René served 13 years imprisonment but, prior to his release, Judge Joan Lenard issued a directive forcing González to remain in America for a further three years and prohibiting him "from associating with or visiting specific places where individuals or groups such as terrorists, members of organizations advocating violence, organized crime

figures are known to frequent". René will be held on probation in Florida – alongside the very terrorist organisations he was there to infiltrate. Furthermore, his wife Olga continues to be denied visitation rights.

The letter, published in *The Observer*, stated that holding René on probation in Florida was "not only a cruel additional punishment but potentially threatening to his safety." René's safety is further compromised by inflammatory statements from Cuban-born Florida Congresswoman

Ileana Ros-Lehtinen who called González an "enemy of America" with "blood on his hands".

René's mother, Irma Schwerert, travelled to the UK recently – alongside Mirta Rodríguez and Magali Llorc whose two sons, Antonio and Fernando, remain unjustly incarcerated in US jails for fighting terrorism – to help raise awareness around the case and intensify the struggle for justice.

More than 250 people braved lashing rain to stand shoulder to shoulder with the mothers of the Miami 5 outside the US Embassy on Thursday 1st December. At our fifth annual candlelit vigil, trade union leaders, lawyers and MPs pledged their continued support for the campaign for family visitation rights and their freedom. Actors, musicians and poets performed moving pieces inspired by the Five and read personal extracts from letters between the Five and their families.

The highlight of the evening was

the appearance of the three mothers who expressed their gratitude and that of their sons for support in the UK. They declared that they would return to Cuba with renewed hope that their cause would continue to be pushed forward.

Irma, Mirta and Magali addressed the Latin America 2011 Conference and were special guests at Unite Sector Conference in Brighton. They addressed each plenary session and three fringe meetings, thanking Unite activists for their unceasing support and solidarity.

Beyond the Frame

23—28 April 2012, London
7—13 May 2012, Glasgow

A special exhibition showcasing work by the Miami Five alongside British and Cuban artists will take place in Spring 2012. Visit the website for more information and to donate online.

www.cubabeyondtheframe.com

¡TAKE ACTION! — SCREEN THE NEW MIAMI FIVE FILM

With support from Unite, we have produced a new Miami Five campaigning film. The five minute documentary outlines the background to the arrest, trial and incarceration of the Miami Five and features interviews with relatives, activists, lawyers and human rights campaigners. The film reveals new evidence that the United States government paid journalists during the trial to write inflammatory and prejudicial articles. It is essential viewing for all those interested in the unjust treatment of the Five and is ideal for screening at branch meetings or other events.

If you would like a copy of the DVD, please get in touch using the contact details on Page 4. The DVD also includes the new documentary *Will the Real Terrorist Please Stand Up* by Saul Landau, which provides historical context for the case and the ongoing narrative of terrorist attacks against Cuba.

Why not spend next May Day in Cuba?

Two specialised trade union tours will visit Cuba next spring to enjoy the iconic and unforgettable May Day celebrations. The **Young Trade Unionists' May Day Brigade** and the **May Day Study Tour** will show solidarity with over one million Cuban workers as they march through Havana's Plaza de la Revolución on 1 May 2012.

"The May Day parade was amazing. It was moving to see so many people coming together to celebrate their country"

Lisa, May Day Brigade 2011

Participants will receive a special invitation to the International Solidarity Conference alongside activists from across the globe and families of the Miami 5.

Professional visits to schools, factories, hospitals and universities will provide insight into the achievements of the revolution and allow delegates to strengthen links with sister unions. Both tours will also visit Havana's famous Museum of the Revolution.

Our fifth annual May Day Brigade will also contribute to the agricultural development of the country through voluntary work. Over 100 young trade unionists – from Unison, Unite, GMB, CWU, RMT, TSSA, BFAWU, PCS and the UCU – have previously taken

part in our May Day Brigade and many have gone on to become increasingly active in their trade union.

Both tours are a wonderful opportunity to see the real Cuba away from the usual tourist trail.

They provide an inspiring and humbling view of Cuba's intrepid resistance against 50 years of blockade and allow you to experience Cuba's rich and diverse cultural heritage whilst providing visible solidarity and support to the Cuban people.



"Cuba really opened my eyes about what can be achieved in a society built around working together for the benefit of everyone"

James, May Day Brigade 2008

University & College Union inspired by Cuba's public investment

A UCU delegation visited Cuba as part of a CSC tour to show solidarity with the island and learn about the concept of *universidad para todos* which aims to turn the entire country into a giant university.

According to Alan Carr, National Treasurer, "anytime is a great time to tour Cuba, but for those involved in Higher Education, this year was a particularly exciting time to visit".

The group heard about Cuba's drive to expand the number of adults in education and observed the steep increases in educational spending – up to 11.4% of GNP. The hope is that public investment will drive economic development and, as Alan remarked, "all this was refreshing for those of us coming from a climate of cut piled upon cut".

The tour met students from nearly 100 developing countries

who are being given free medical training and were privileged to meet veterans of the revolution and the Bay of Pigs invasion. They learnt about Cuban society in visits to the Cuban Friendship Institute, the Federation of Cuban Women, a local Committee for the Defence of the Revolution and an urban organic farm.

The tour left the group with an "immense respect for a people struggling to build a better life

for all in the face of difficulties that would overwhelm most of us" and Alan urged other unions to make use of CSC's assistance to organise their own study tours. "You will enjoy it," said Alan "and, by your presence, you will offer a visible symbol of support and solidarity to our comrades in Cuba".

¡TAKE ACTION! — JOIN A SPECIALIST TRADE UNION VISIT TO CUBA

The best way to learn about Cuba and the achievements of the revolution is to visit – so why not join one of our tours or send a delegate from your union?

Young Trade Unionists' May Day Brigade, 26 April – 10 May 2012, £999 – Delegates will stay on the Julio Mella camp outside Havana and will take part in solidarity work. Three nights will be spent at the Hotel Vedado in Old Havana. Although aimed at young trade unionists, all are welcome!

May Day Study Tour, 22 April – 3 May 2012, price starts at £1,415 – Accommodation in Havana will be in the iconic Hotel Plaza. More details [here](#).

CSC organise bespoke trade union tours and exchanges with sister unions in Cuba. A number of trade unions took this opportunity to strengthen ties with their Cuban counterparts in 2011 and anyone interested in a similar exchange – or either of our May Day breaks – should contact our Cuban Travel Shop via email tours@cuba-solidarity.org.uk or telephone (020 8800 0155)



HANDS OFF CUBA!

The Cuba Solidarity Campaign works in the UK against the illegal US blockade of Cuba, to defend the Cuban peoples' right to self-determination and for freedom for the Miami Five

Cuba Solidarity Campaign

Contact CSC

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CSC at TUC and Labour Party conferences

Nearly 200 delegates attended a lively Latin America solidarity meeting and marked the 13th anniversary of the arrest of the Miami Five at TUC conference in London.

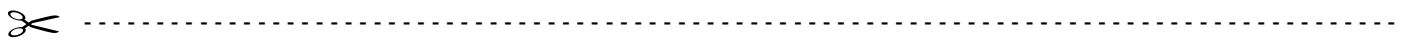
Len McCluskey, Unite General Secretary, paid tribute to the Cuban 'Che Guevara' medical brigade in Nicaragua which has performed more than four million consultations since 2007. Len noted that "whilst the prospect for trade unionists in non-ALBA countries is bleak" Cuba is leading the way in providing "real and material benefits" to the dispossessed of Latin America.

Cuban Ambassador, Esther Armenteros, lamented the lack of coverage in the mainstream media of the 13th anniversary of the Miami Five's arrest. Esther told attendees that the Miami Five "remain unjustly imprisoned for combating terrorism against our country and have been subjected to all sorts of humiliations".

At a packed CSC fringe at Labour Party conference, Esther declared, "there is no area of Cuba that is not affected by the blockade, but the main problem is the way it interferes with our trade with other countries. We have to buy things from third countries because we do not have access to the US market". As a result, Cuba has to pay inflated prices for imports that have gone through intermediaries.

Stephen Cavalier of Thompsons Solicitors praised Cuba's international work through literacy programmes such as *Yo, Si Puedo* and the sight-saving Operation Miracle which has restored the sight of over 2 million people across Latin America.

Former Labour MP Colin Burgon argued that "Latin America represents the rebirth of socialism in the 21st century and our job is to make that argument relevant in the UK".



Affiliate your region/branch to the Cuba Solidarity Campaign

Affiliating to CSC is the best way to help campaign against the illegal U.S blockade, support Cuba's right to self-determination and champion the social achievements of the Cuban people. All affiliates receive our quarterly magazine CubaSí, the right to vote at our AGM, and news on Cuba, campaigning actions, study tours plus much more. Please complete and return the form below or sign-up [online](#). Affiliation is **£40 for a branch** and **£50 for a region**.

Trade Union: _____

Name of Branch/Region: _____

Name of contact: _____ Position: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Email: _____

Affiliation Fee: _____ Donation: _____ Total: _____

Cheques should be made payable to 'Cuba Solidarity Campaign' and returned to the address above

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR TRADE UNION AFFILIATES

