

Dear delegates and guests,

We are celebrating this XVI Encounter of European Solidarity with Cuba together with 130 leaders of the solidarity movement from 30 countries representing their organizations and members. We have met today in Berlin to discuss and analyze strategies that the solidarity movement for Cuba in Europe shall assume and concentrate on.

In the name of the Cuban delegation, I would like to take this occasion to express the organizing committee of this important event, the German Network of Solidarity with Cuba, our deepest respect and recognition and our thanks for all the preparations that have been realized.

It has been two years now the representatives of solidarity and friendship with Cuba have met in Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria, where we talked about the main activities that have been realized and established strategies of work. We also assumed commitments of mutual activities against the US-blockade, in the struggle for the liberation of the 5 and against the campaign of huge media, among others.

Today, when we look back to what has been accomplished, we can say without any doubt that we observe a major role of response in the European Solidarity Movement. It is a potential that counts with 859 Friendship Association in 45 countries and 132 Committees for the Liberation of the 5 in 33 countries. All of them keep holding up their flag in favour and defense of the Cuban Revolution and for its liberation. Even though that it's not numbers that count, we can proudly say that Europe is the continent with the largest quantity organizations working in favour of Cuba and with a very high influence.

We must keep on working for the creation of Friendship Organizations in Uzbekistán, Turkmenistán, Georgia, Moldavia, Lichtenstein, Monaco and Letland where we are sure that positive feelings towards Cuba exist and friends of Cuba do exist but have not yet been able to organize themselves sufficiently and insert themselves into the movement.

There is a moderate advance in our efforts to diversify the solidarity with Cuba.

The idea is to make the movement more and more inclusive and representative to other sectors and individuals which would participate in the movement as a matter of respect. This way, as time goes by, we may win more and more people who would support Cuba in its struggle for selfdetermination claiming the same rights for themselves. The diversity and amplitude of our files has to be the strength of our struggle and it offers us to enhance our work towards multiple directions and with the utmost of variety.

We have also been successful in the incorporation of young people interested in Cuba to our associations. It is very important to work with the younger generations because it gives us the chance not only to approach them to a social system which is completely different to what they know and live everyday with totally different values that they may in our country. And as a matter of fact it is a constant duty for our associations in order to achieve a major participation of younger generations for the freshness of ideas they bring which guarantee the continuation of the solidarity work of the past and our actual generation.

We are aware of the work accomplished by our members with regard to the use of alternative media and social networks as additional instruments to expand the reality of Cuba and to oppose the campaigns of mass media designed from the United States in cooperation with the reactionary governments in Europe. One the most famous example was the divulgation of "The reasons of Cuba", the Reflections of our Comander in Chief and others. However, we cannot yet be satisfied with the retroalimantation of the

activities we realize in favour of our Cuban brothers. Cuba needs to nourish itself - with support of the ICAP – to divulge and retroaliment what we are doing.

In many other countries, national meetings have been realized being considered an important tool of reflection as well as coordination of new activities and strategies for the future. Any method used is valid always and if we have the clear vision that a globalized world needs a major level of activities and coordination of our work not just within Europe but with the whole world. As we give more and more importance to this fact we will have an impact in our activities. Our friends in the United States should know what you guys are doing here in Europe in favour of the 5. Only with high impact political activities, we will be able to conquer the enemies of the revolution.

This experience is especially valid for the confrontation with the media campaigns and the struggle for the liberation of the 5 heroes. The need for unity is and will continue to be a basic principle of the activities of our organisation of friendship and solidarity.

In 2011, we launched the European Campaign “one million signatures for the 5”. Even if the planned number of signatures could not be achieved, it has been an important source of mobilization in many countries. It gave us a chance to inform lots of people about the case of the 5 even were we never thought we might achieve that

In 2012, our countries supported the Day of Solidarity with the 5 which took place in Washington in the month of April. The majority of our organizations have tried to united for the mentioned activities. Experiences like this confirm the importance of coordination and concertation of activities to achieve a higher level of success in our continent.

There have been so many, diverse and so creative actions being carried out by our friends in favour of the 5. We would not be able to name each and every one of them, so that I will mention only some of them here which had a great impact on the public opinion and drew attention to the case. Those were: the Around-the-world-tour by the countries that formerly belonged to the Soviet Union; the 5 in the Antarctic, cultural project: “Beyond the Frame” realized in England and Scotland there Cuban and British artists participated.

In addition to those special activities, there has always been the dedication of all those organizations to monthly bring our protest to the US-Embassies in their respective countries. Also demonstrations in vital places of the national and social live, sending letters to members of the Congress, to President Obama and the First Lady, among others. Our efforts have to more and more pushed forward, in the search for new spaces that allow us to extend the importance and the influence in our societies and especially in the United States.

We have to value the opportunities that each space can give us and from here search for options that allow us to knock on certain doors, to send messages to members of the US-Congress and other figures of the system.

Our organizations have supported with enthusiasms and high-level compromise the visits of family members of the 5 to Spain, the Czech Republic, Austria, Slovenia, Germany, Italy, the Nordic Countries, England and Scotland among others. Our priority should be now to take them to countries they have not been yet.

We wish to thank all those of our friends and organizations that have continuously realized activities to celebrate the most important data of Cuban history giving a permanent glance of Cuban reality.

We would like to extend this recognition to all those organizations that have achieved to be present in the

international brigades of voluntary work in Cuba as well as the colloquia for the liberation of the 5, being a vital space of the Cuban reality and of exchange between all our organizations. We know very well that the financial possibilities are limited, however, we maintain our appeal to keep pushing and promoting those events carried out by the ICAP as important opportunities to strengthen the solidarity with Cuba in Europe.

The movement of international brigades does still continue. The participants are of all different ages and generations. In some of them, like the Latin American brige, Puerto Rican as well as the European, young people predominate the activity while in our international March for the 1st of May, we can see a higher presence of older people from Europe and Latin America. Also the participation of political parties and trade unions is quite heterogenous, even though most of them are from left-wingt parties or of progressive tendency. Where this is not the case, it shows that those people are sympathetic to the Cuban Revolution. There is also a huge variety of sectors that take part, such as students, professionals, lawyers, doctors, economists and academic instructors. A tendency is that 80 % of the brigadists are visting Cuba for first time and more than 50 % are not part of the solidarity movement.

Every a young person is coming back from a brigade or any other event in Cuba, he/she does not only bring the experience of sharing the reality of a people that is struggling for its sovereignty, but will also be much more sensitive for the cause of Cuba. We really will have to benefit a lot more from our brigadists and assure that they will repeat and spread the experience they lived during their stay. This might be a possibility to get new members and get each time closer to the Cuban reality.

The alignments given by the VI Congress of the CCP are showing the way to an update of our economic model, being an unavoidable necessity in order to maintain the social progresses achieved by the revolution under the principles of planification, rationality and efficiency, using our rressources with the objective to keep on developing our revolutionary process and achieve higher superior levels of our socio-economic development.

The enemies of Cuba, with its enormous propagandistic machine, will not lose any chance to launch mediatic campaigns against our country. Today, with the measures taken by our government they claim that everything is going to slow or that they are not enough, with the only purpose of creating confusion between those that are sympathetic with our revolutionary process. Trying to confuse those people that know about our reality or even our own fellow countrymen.

Our country will continue to carry out changes that we consider opportune, without any hurry, pressure and fear of the constant attacks and campaigns that pretend to influence people's opinion about our achieves.

We never ignore the material limits that many times do not allow us to advance in the velocity we would like to. Many of them are part of the economic crisis that now threatens our planet nowadays and that affect the prices of food products, combustibles and practically everything that our country needs to import. This has to be added of course to the difficulties that the criminal blockade is causing us which has been reinforced with each and every goverment of the United States, even now with President Obama.

We will keep advancing and realizing all changes that are necessary in order to keep up with our economic model without ever backing off to the pressures of our enemies.

The European Union has shown with its hostile position towards our island a not very pragmatic policy in its politics against Cuba. At this moment the measures of the European Union are in a state of recession due to a lack of consens between the member states. Our country is and has always been willing to re-establish a political dialogue under terms of mutual respect, where we will be looking for solutions without abandoning our principles.

Our sincere solidarity is with those peoples who nowadays suffer the consequences of the neoliberalism applied in their countries and we hope they will find a way out of the crisis with sovereignty and independence.

As you all know, since 1992 our country has received a growing support against the blockade by the General Assembly of the United Nations. The application of the blockade to our small island is not only a massive and systematic violation of human rights of the Cubans, it is also an infringement of the rights of North Americans that does not allow them to visit our island and to other peoples who suffer the limits imposed by the transnational from Northern America.

The government of the United States, being used to determine the destiny of human beings all over the world, still does not understand the capacity of resistance, of self-respect and struggle of peoples in the world for its sovereignty and liberty. One example is Latin America, living a crucial time in its history for its ambition of preserving the identity of their people and advance in the consolidation of a true sovereignty.

The victory of President Hugo Chávez in Venezuela last October 7th, was not only a shock for the imperialist aspirations, the internal opposition – it mainly showed the strong support of the people of this country for its political project as well as the project of Latin American integration and cooperation that are taking place at this moment. The integration of Latin America and the Caribbean is not just a dream now, it has become a reality and continues its march in the tradition of emancipatory combatants such as Bolívar and Martí.

The relationship that we need to push today is the one of the European Union with the CELAC in order to become the “Constitution of the Community of the Latin American and Caribbean States,” as Raul said, the most important achievement of the last 200 years.

Dear friends,

The growing support in the struggle for the liberation of our Five Heroes is the most important task of the solidarity movement at this moment. In the meantime, already 14 years of unjust incarceration have passed without that the northamerican had demonstrated even a minimum of goodwill to support justice. All the contrary, they have created juridical mechanisms of all kind in order to prevent any action for their liberation. Legal activities have come to an end and all we have left is the political fight and mediatic fight of our friends all over the world.

To all those unjust penalties, there is additionally the pain and the unreparable damage caused to their families in those 14 years of imprisonment and separation.

From November 28 to December 1st we will be celebrating the VIII Colloquium for the liberation of the Five in Holguín. Until now, already 80 European delegates have confirmed their assistance in this important event with a participation of about 50 countries, which has become an important space for projection and new strategies.

We would like to ask you to make sure that more than ever any act of solidarity with the Five should find its way to the public opinion and especially that of people in North America where in the end the destiny of our brothers will be decided. We shall never fail in this target. It is where we have to concentrate our actions that will allow us to achieve a major and more direct impact. donde finalmente se decidirá el destino de nuestros hermanos.

It is necessary that we increment our efforts in order to get the support of a large number of social and political actors. You are the hope we have to make their return to their country and families reality.

In 2006, during the XIII European Solidarity Meeting in Istanbul/Turkey, we approved the idea of creating a Troika which would coordinate the activities all over the continent. A project that rested more in the spirit than in the action.

From this point, we would like to take the chance to achieve a major concertation and coordination in the activities of the solidarity movement either by ratifying the mechanisms of this agreement or by new projects that may rise from our debates.

We are in the need to consolidate our unity which will help us to project political actions of major dimension within the European public opinion. We recognize that so far this has not achieved the expected results which we would like to propose you for analysis where we search for the implementation of an effective coordination of activities of the movement of solidarity with Cuba in this continent.

Another aspect we would like to draw your attention to is a more efficient use of social networks and alternative media as a way to counterrest campaigns that are constantly launched by the enemies of the Cuban Revolution.

We know that we are not alone in this decisive struggle to preserve our right of independence and a live in dignity. We count with the solidarity of many women and man all over the planet. Justice and truth.

We wish to express our thanks to all those that have sent us messages of condolence for the 11 Cubans victims of hurricane Sandy, the most deadly that has hit our island in the last 50 years. We do not yet have exact figures of the damages cause by hurricane Sandy, but they are really big. Especially in houses and appartments (188.000 houses), our systems of energy and communication, agriculture (about 100.000 ha of growings, with a huge impact on our alimentary situation. Cubans have shown their solidarity and confirmed once again that real solidarity is when you share the little you have.

We shall confirm today that our sacrifice Hoy podemos afirmar que el sacrificio de todos ustedes, quienes de forma altruista defienden la bandera de la solidaridad con las causas justas y humanas en un mundo, donde peligrá constantemente la hermandad, solidaridad y la propia existencia humana, no es en vano.

Let's make this Encounter a forum of struggle to continue and move on the solidarity between our peoples.

Before I end, I would like to invite you to participate in the last week of November 2014 in the Third Worldwide Meeting of Solidarity with Cuba in our 55th year of revolution.

Thanking for saying for indefinite times of European and world history, CUBA SI! with an accent on the "I".

We will not disappoint you!

Long live international solidarity!

Long live Fidel and Raúl!

Freedem for the Five!

Long live the Cuban Revolution!

Thank you very much.

