

PROTEST FROM THE APOSTOLIC COALITION OF CUBA

14 OCTOBER 2010

Taking into consideration:

- That the New Apostolic Reform in Cuba has led to the birth of hundreds of ministries, churches and networks which operate separately from the established ecclesiastical institutions; that in order to maintain unity and healthy doctrine we have come together to form the Apostolic Coalition of Cuba;
- That the freedoms of belief, of assembly, manifestation and religious association are rights recognized by the international community in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights as well as being recognised in the Constitution of the Republic of Cuba;
- That in Cuba there is no Law of Association and Worship which would allow for the registration and legalisation of new ministries, churches or networks, and for which reason hundreds of these are currently operating without legal status, deprived of fundamental rights and freedoms;
- That the Cuban government makes the claim, nationally and internationally, that the different religious groups on this island enjoy all rights and freedoms; and that they are treated without any differences and with equal consideration.

We denounce:

- That we in the Apostolic Coalition of Cuba are victims of the most absurd discrimination. They attempt to take away our most fundamental rights and freedoms of belief, assembly, manifestation and religious association.
- That the ministers and disciples of our congregations are being accused and persecuted, they throw them out of their work, evict them from their houses which are fundamentally necessary for the pastors, destroy local meeting places, confiscate their goods and tools which are used in religious celebrations, warning letters, arbitrary detention, threats, etc, all of which we can prove. We have evidence that these are not isolated incidents, but rather guided at the highest levels of Government, the Communist Party and State Security.
- That they do not listen to us, and when we have protested or denounced these abuses before the relevant state bodies, they take no notice; They do not respect the Magna Carta of the Republic of Cuba and they devalue the Declaration of Human Rights; and rather than taking action against those who violate the law and individual right they attack us even more.
- That in order to justify these violations of our rights and liberties, the government and its institutions, have resorted to defamation and slander, they label us "Illegal", they call us counter-revolutionary, CIA agents, lazy, that we disturb public order, etc. This is all a farce in order to justify their arbitrary actions and to seek popular support.
- That our families, and especially our children, are treated differently and discriminated against; this affects their studies, their ability to find work, and all other parts of social life.

We demand:

- An end to the threats, defamation, repression, persecution and harassment on the part of the Cuban government against the Apostolic ministries and churches; we are not a political opposition group, but rather part of a Church which is working outside of traditional and institutional councils and we demand a space to express our faith in God in our own country.
- The efficient establishment of a Law on Association and Worship which would make it possible to legalise and register the hundreds of Apostolic ministries, churches and networks and which would guarantee the right and freedom of assembly, manifestation, and religious association.
- Authorisation to build new church buildings and meeting places, as well as the ability to acquire land for this purpose, when that might be necessary.
- The freedom to publicly manifest our beliefs through the media (television, radio, press, internet) as well as access to use public places (theatres, public squares, parks, stadiums, etc) to celebrate special activities.
- Freedom for non-Cuban Apostolic ministers to enter the country and to work with our congregations and for Cuban Apostolic ministers to leave to visit other countries.
- The freedom to receive Bibles, literature and Christian materials from abroad, as well as to print and distribute material on the island.

This protest is to be published in all media and we pray for a quick response.

Those of us present, the Apostolic Council of the Apostolic Coalition of Cuba, sign:

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