

PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday, 5th of August 2009

Junge Union: Free political prisoners in Cuba – open up for democratic reform!

On the occasion of Cuban Resistance Day on the 5th of August the Vice-President of IYDU (International Democrat Union) and Federal Treasurer of the Junge Union, Daniel Walther, and the First Vice-President of the YEPP (Youth of the European People's Party) and Chairman of the International Commission of the Junge Union, Thomas Schneider, address an open letter to the ambassador of the Republic of Cuba in Germany, Gerardo Peñalver Portal:

“Today is the 15th anniversary of the peaceful demonstrations in Havana on the 5th of August in which thousands of Cubans, having witnessed the political turnaround in Eastern Europe brought about by successful movements for democracy, demanded freedom, political self-determination and an end to political repression. This event would have provided an opportunity for peaceful change towards a political and social system appropriate for our time that would have opened up the way for freedom and political self-determination of the Cuban people. The communist regime of Cuba though, chose the way of oppression.

Since 1994 the repression against opposition activists has been extended and increased massively. According to the International Society for Human Rights there are some 300 political prisoners in Cuba that are kept under arrest and tortured because of non-violent activities critical of the regime. Often the prisoners have been condemned to decade-long prison terms and suffer from inhumane conditions in the prisons that seriously impair them. Under the leadership of Fidel Castro and his brother Raúl the repression was broadened generally and the liberties of citizens restricted severely, leading to a continuously growing number of prison inmates. As an example foreign press and foreign media are forbidden and the freedom of movement is denied. The access to the internet is extremely curtailed too and the unlicensed possession of computers and satellite-TV equipment is punished with long prison terms. It is particularly the youth of Cuba that is suffering under these conditions, being prevented from gaining access to their generation in the rest of the world.

Considering all this, we request the Cuban government to immediately respect the international commitments it entered into, to respect human and civil rights and to free and recompense all political prisoners. Only a democratic opening can bring the Cuban people on the path to freedom, self-determination and wealth. “

Responsible: **Thomas Dautzenberg** (Secretary General)

Junge Union Deutschlands Federal Office
Inselstraße 1 b 10179 Berlin Germany Phone: +49/(0)30/27 87 87 -0 Fax: +49/(0)30/27 87 87-20
geschaeftsfuehrer@junge-union.de www.junge-union.de