

PARLAMENTO EUROPEO



DIPUTADO AL PARLAMENTO EUROPEO

ANTONIO LÓPEZ-ISTÚRIZ, MEP

Brussels, 25 January 2011

Ladies and Gentlemen:

In the spirit of Alfred Nobel whose wish was to honor people who have done great deeds for humanity in every field of science and human achievement, but especially in the promotion of peace, we have an opportunity each year to celebrate and recognize an individual or individuals who have dedicated their lives to witness peace and bring to our attention those who have systematically tried to destroy it. One of the highest such honors bestowed on a person or persons is the Nobel Peace Prize. Throughout the years the nominations for the same have included victims of injustice, witnesses to peace and those who committed their lives to non-violence.

With that in mind we, the undersigned members of the European Parliament, hereby nominate for the Nobel Peace Prize, **Dr. Óscar Elías Biscet González**, who has been unjustly imprisoned for a crime of conscience and is serving a 25-year prison sentence in Cuba for allegedly committing crimes against the sovereignty and the integrity of the Cuban territory.

Trained as a physician, Biscet initiated protests for human rights violations in Cuba in the 1980s, which followed to his immediate suspension from his job at Hospital Nacional one year after receiving his medical degree. In 1988, Biscet expressed his political tension with the communist regime through his speeches, and in 1994 the Cuban government officially opened a case file on him labeling him as a counter-revolutionary and dangerous person. In 1997, he founded the Lawton Foundation for Human Rights in collaboration with fellow members of the peaceful opposition movement. This non-governmental humanitarian and peaceful organization is based upon the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and promotes the study of defense, and the denunciation of human rights violations. Biscet and his wife were barred from the Cuban National Health System in February 1998 because of Biscet's activism, and this occurred immediately after he raised his voice against the government practices in the medical field. He was arrested in 1999 along with two other dozen dissidents for organizing meetings in Havana and Matanzas. Biscet was thus sentenced to three years in prison for "inciting delinquent behavior" and "insulting the symbols of the homeland." He was released in November 2002, but was arrested again a month later after he met with an American diplomat stationed in Cuba to discuss a petition drive and human rights. He was sentenced to 25 years in prison for "disorderly conduct" and "counter-revolutionary activities." He is currently held at Combinado del Este Prison in Havana, where he is not allowed outside visitors, including medical practitioners or clergy.

The regime's abuse of Biscet has been horrific. He has endured solitary confinement for refusing to wear a prisoner's uniform. He has lived with insufficient light or no light at all, no running water and no bed. When trying to assist other prisoners who were being mistreated, he was forced to spend time in a special cell known as the dungeon. In 2003, in response to a petition concerning Dr. Biscet, the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention determined that Dr. Biscet was being held in violation of Articles 9, 10, 19, 20 and 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, throughout his ordeal, Dr. Biscet continued to call for non-violence, and has called forth the memory of personal heroes such as Mahatma Ghandi and Martin Luther King, Jr.

In 2005, the United Nations called on the Government of Cuba to immediately release Dr. Biscet. Despite these and other appeals, Dr. Biscet remains imprisoned to this day. While Dr. Biscet may well be one of the most visible prisoners of conscience in Cuba, there are still over 60 others who share his

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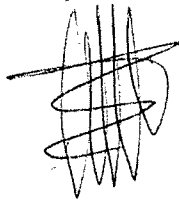
fate in silence. They share in Dr. Biscet's determination to stand, peacefully, in line with their ideals, no matter the hard struggle or the tough suffering they will have to endure.

With the efforts of the United States Congressmen, led by Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart and Congressman Christopher Smith, efforts have been made on an international level to support Dr. Biscet's immediate release. With other world leaders, such as Viktor Orban, the Prime Minister of Hungary and the current President of the European Council, taking the case of Dr. Biscet to their hearts, it becomes clearer each day that the injustice that has been done to Dr. Biscet by the Cuban regime is unforgivable, standing out for its cruelty and repression, and for its profound disregard of human dignity and human rights.

Therefore, we ask the Norwegian Nobel Prize Committee to stand up and support Dr. Biscet and the other Cuban prisoners of conscience and recognize their long-standing battle for freedom of speech and conscience. Dr. Biscet and the other Cuban prisoners' unspeakable plight deserve our full recognition and complete support.

Today, dear Sirs, you can do so by bestowing the greatest honor represented by the Nobel Peace Prize on Dr. Biscet, thereby allowing his example to live on, serving as a beacon of freedom and liberty both within the Cuban nation and worldwide.

Sincerely,



Antonio López-Istúriz White, MEP

Jaime Mayor Oreja, MEP
Jose Ignacio Salafranca, MEP
Pablo Arias Echevarría, MEP
Carlos Iturgáiz, MEP
Pablo Zalba, MEP
Maria Pilar Ayuso González, MEP
Luis de Grandes Pascual, MEP
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Agustín Díaz de Mera, MEP
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