

URGENT ACTION

PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE ATTACKED IN PRISON

On 19 December 2017, after being transferred from the Provisional Prison of Holguín to Cuba SI prison, three other prisoners attacked Eduardo Cardet, according to his wife. He is a prisoner of conscience who must be released immediately and unconditionally.

On 19 December 2017, the afternoon after authorities transferred **Dr Eduardo Cardet Concepción** from the Provisional Prison of Holguín to Cuba SI prison in the same province, three other prisoners allegedly attacked him, according to his wife, Yaimaris Vecino. Prison authorities only informed his wife and family that same day that they would be transferring Eduardo Cardet to a different prison. They only permitted his family to see him for several minutes and did not provide the family with reasons for the transfer.

Yaimaris Vecino told Amnesty International that prison officials did not permit her to visit her husband after the attack until 15 January 2018, when she observed two circular scars to Eduardo Cardet's abdomen. She stated that her husband told her that he had not received medical attention since the attack and was experiencing headaches and dizziness.

On 9 January, Eduardo Cardet's sister lodged a complaint regarding the alleged attack with the Public Prosecutor in Havana, the capital. As of 19 January the family had not received a response, according to Yaimaris Vecino.

Eduardo Cardet is the leader of the pro-democracy movement Christian Liberation Movement (Movimiento Cristiano Liberación, MCL). He has been imprisoned in Holguín since his arrest on 30 November 2016, five days after the death of the former leader of Cuba, Fidel Castro. Prior to his arrest, Eduardo Cardet gave a number of interviews published in international media in which he was critical of the Cuban government.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to release human rights defender Dr Eduardo Cardet immediately and unconditionally, as he is a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression;
- Urging them to ensure that, pending his release, he is provided with any medical care of his choosing; that he is not tortured or otherwise ill-treated; and that he is granted regular access to family and lawyers of his choosing;
- Calling on them to investigate the alleged attack of Eduardo Cardet and to ensure that effective measures are put in place to ensure his safety and the security of prisoners at all times.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 5 MARCH 2018 TO:

President of the Republic

Raúl Castro Ruz
 Presidente de la República de Cuba
 La Habana, Cuba
 Fax: +41 22 758 9431 (Cuba Office in Geneva); +1 212 779 1697 (via Cuban Mission to UN)
 Email: cuba_onu@cubamission.com (c/o Cuban Mission to UN)
 Twitter: @RaulCastroR
Salutation: Your Excellency

Attorney General

Dr. Dario Delgado Cura
 Fiscal General de la República
 Fiscalía General de la República
 Amistad 552, e/Monte y Estrella
 Centro Habana, La Habana, Cuba
 Email: relaciones@fgr.cu
 Twitter: @FGR_Cuba
Salutation: Dear Attorney General

Minister of Justice

María Esther Reus
 Ministerio de Justicia
 Calle O # 216 E/ 23 y 25 Vdo. Plaza de la Revolución
 La Habana, Cuba
 Twitter: @CubaMinjus
Salutation: Dear Minister

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Her Excellency **Teresita Vicente**, Embassy of the Republic of Cuba, 167 High Holborn WC1 6PA, 020 7240 2488, Fax 020 7836 2602, secembajador@uk.embacuba.cu, www.cubadiplomata.cu

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the third update of UA 32/17. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr25/6363/2017/en/

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

According to five witnesses who spoke to Amnesty International by telephone on the condition of anonymity, Eduardo Cardet was pushed off his bicycle and violently detained in the early evening of 30 November 2016 by at least four plain clothed and one uniformed police officer as he returned home after visiting his mother. According to his wife, who witnessed her husband's detention with their two children, Eduardo Cardet is charged with attacking an official of the state (*atentado*). This offence is covered under Article 142.1 of the Criminal Code. One officer is alleging that Eduardo Cardet pushed him during his arrest. All witnesses who spoke with Amnesty International counter this allegation, and state that Eduardo Cardet was quickly and violently restrained by plain clothed officials, placed in handcuffs, and beaten, and had no opportunity for self-defence. The witnesses believe that Eduardo Cardet was arrested for his beliefs and ideas. Amnesty International was able to review a copy of the sentence at appeal emitted by the provincial court of Holguin. The sentence makes no mention of the original grounds for the arrest, suggesting the arrest was arbitrary. On 17 May, the Popular Provincial Court of Holguín (Tribunal Provincial Popular de Holguín) ratified in appeal the judgement handed down on 20 March sentencing Dr Eduardo Cardet Concepción to three years in prison.

The Christian Liberation Movement (Movimiento Cristiano Liberación, MCL) is a prominent actor in the pro-democracy movement in Cuba. According to its website, it is a movement for peaceful and democratic change and respect for human dignity. It was founded in 1988 by Oswaldo Payá Sardiñas, who became a visible figure of the Cuban political opposition, and four other activists. Amnesty International has documented harassment and intimidation of members of the MCL for decades. In 1991, after Oswaldo Payá Sardiñas presented a petition calling for a national referendum relating to constitutional reform, he had his home destroyed by over 200 people, said to be members of a Rapid Response Brigade. After Oswaldo Payá announced his intention to put himself forward as a candidate for deputy to the National Assembly for the municipality of Cerro, Havana, members of his organization were reportedly subjected to frequent questioning and short-term detention.

In an interview published on 16 September 2016 by ABC International, Eduardo Cardet stated: "Political activities are passed off as criminal offences such as inciting public scandal, contempt of or offences against the authorities, and the political police use these classifications to lock up dissidents" (*Se disfraza la actividad política con hechos delictivos comunes, por ejemplo, escándalo público, desacato, atentado, figuras que utiliza la policía política para encarcelar a los disidentes*).

Cuba is closed to Amnesty International and nearly all independent international human rights monitors.

Further information on UA: 32/17 Index: AMR 25/7759/2018 Issue Date: 22 January 2018