

URGENT ACTION

CUBAN COUPLE DETAINED FOR PROTEST ACTIVITIES

A Cuban couple have been detained on trumped up charges in response to taking part in peaceful protests which criticise the government. They are prisoners of conscience, detained solely for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression.

Lady in White **Yasmín Conyedo Riverón** and her husband, **Yusmani Rafael Álvarez Esmori** have been detained since 8 January on charges of using “violence or intimidation” against a state official (“atentado”). The charge carries a prison sentence of up to five years. They were arrested following a demonstration by government supporters in front of their house which apparently aimed to prevent Yasmín Conyedo Riverón from attending mass with members of the Ladies in White, a peaceful protest group of which she is part, which campaigns for the release of political prisoners in Cuba. The couple were arrested alongside seven other Ladies in White.

The couple were released later the same day, and as they returned to their home, a neighbour who is a local official from the Cuban Communist Party (Partido Comunista de Cuba, PCC) accosted Yasmín Conyedo Riverón. The neighbour insulted Yasmín Conyedo Riverón and slapped her in the face. Yasmín Conyedo Riverón’s aunt, who was at the house, retaliated by slapping the PCC official in the face. Two police officers then arrested Yasmín Conyedo Riverón and Yusmani Rafael Álvarez Esmori again despite Yasmín Conyedo Riverón’s aunt informing local authorities twice that it had been her who had slapped the PCC official. The authorities have refused to respond. The PCC official has also asked the local public prosecutor to drop the charges against the couple.

Amnesty International believes that their arrest and detention is in response to the couple’s peaceful expression to their right to freedom of expression and that it is intended to send a message of intimidation to other government critics. They are prisoners of conscience and should be immediately and unconditionally released.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Calling on the Cuban authorities to release Yasmín Conyedo Riverón and Yusmani Rafael Álvarez Esmori immediately and unconditionally, as they are prisoners of conscience, detained solely for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression
- Urging the authorities to remove unlawful restrictions on freedoms of expression, association and assembly.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 3 MAY 2012 TO:

Head of State and Government

Raúl Castro Ruz
 Presidente de la República de Cuba
 La Habana,
 Cuba
 Fax: +53 7 83 33 085 (via Foreign
 Ministry); +1 212 779 1697 (via Cuban
 Mission to UN)
 Email: cuba@un.int (c/o Cuban Mission
 to UN)

Salutation: Your Excellency

Attorney General

Dr. Darío Delgado Cura
 Fiscal General de la República,
 Fiscalía General de la República,
 Amistad 552, e/Monte y Estrella, Centro
 Habana,
 La Habana

Cuba

Salutation: Dear Attorney General

And copies to:

Interior Minister

General Abelardo Coloma Ibarra
 Ministro del Interior y Prisiones
 Ministerio del Interior,
 Plaza de la Revolución,
 La Habana, Cuba

Fax: +1 212 779 1697 (via Cuban
 Mission to UN)

Email: correominint@mn.mn.co.cu

Salutation: Your Excellency

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Yasmín Conyedo Riverón is the representative of the Ladies in White in the province of Villa Clara and also an independent journalist. The Ladies in White campaign for the release of political prisoners and for the lifting of restrictions on fundamental civil and political freedoms in Cuba. Members of the organization have been repeatedly prevented from meeting together, including to attend mass on Sundays.

Yusmani Rafael Álvarez Esmori is a member of the Las Villas Democratic Youth League.

The couple were detained for several hours on 25 December 2011 as they tried to attend Christmas mass. Yasmín Conyedo Riverón has a six year-old daughter.

Name: Yasmín Conyedo Riverón

Gender m/f: f

Name: Yusmani Rafael Álvarez Esmori

Gender m/f: m

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