

# URGENT ACTION

## CUBA: PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE MAYKEL OSORBO IN DANGER

Maykel Castillo Pérez, also known as "Maykel Osorbo" is a Cuban musician and prisoner of conscience who has faced constant harassment and arbitrary detentions. On May 18, 2021, state security agents arrested him at his home. In June 2022, he was sentenced to nine years in prison. Since April 2023, there are reports that indicate that he has been threatened by fellow inmates in his detention area, and the Cuban authorities have not ensured his safety.

**TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER**

**Miguel Díaz-Canel, President of Cuba**

Hidalgo Esq. 6, Plaza de La Revolución, CP 10400, La Habana, Cuba

Email: despacho@presidencia.gob.cu

Dear President,

*I am writing to bring attention to the case of the musician Maykel Castillo Pérez, who has been subjected to unjust detention, harassment and violent threats while in prison.*

*According to information received by Amnesty International, Maykel has resorted to extreme measures, such as sewing his mouth shut, as a form of protest against the violent threats by fellow inmates and security officers in the prison since April 2023.*

*His family informed Amnesty International that Maykel's current health status is a significant concern. He suffers from swollen lymph nodes, and unfortunately, the prison authorities have not provided transparent and trustworthy medical diagnoses, adding to the uncertainty and fear surrounding his well-being.*

*Amnesty International sent an [open letter](#) to your office on May 18, 2023, highlighting the threats Maykel's had received and asking for his immediate release. Regrettably, as of now, no response has been received regarding this matter.*

*Maykel Castillo Pérez is a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned solely for exercising his rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.*

*I strongly urge you to take immediate action and order the unconditional release of Maykel Castillo Pérez. Furthermore, I ask you to protect Maykel from the harassment and threats he is receiving in prison.*

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Sincerely,

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Maykel Castillo Pérez, more commonly known by his artistic name: "Maykel Osorbo", is a Cuban musician. He is also one of the authors of the song "Patria y Vida" two times Grammy Latino winner, that has become a protest anthem for its critical view of the Cuban government.

The musician has been subjected to constant harassment by authorities and arbitrarily detained several times. On May 18, 2021, state security agents detained the musician at his home, and for the 10 days following his arrest, refused to provide information on his whereabouts to family and loved ones. In January 2022, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention concluded that Castillo Pérez had been arbitrarily detained and said the Cuban government should release him immediately.

The UN experts found that Castillo Pérez had been detained for exercising his fundamental rights and had suffered due process violations, including abusive limitations to his right to defend himself. In June 2022, the Popular Municipal Court of Central Havana sentenced Maykel Castillo to nine years in prison. Castillo is still currently in the "5 y Medio" prison, in Pinar del Río, Cuba in poor health with limited access to quality medical care.

Cuban authorities haven't responded to the request of Castillo Pérez to leave the country with his family. He and his family were approved to travel to the United States at the beginning of 2023.

Since the beginning of April 2023, the organization started receiving reports that Maykel has been harassed and threatened by other prisoners to harm him after authorities installed a camera in the area where he is detained. Maykel made the complaint to the Cuban authorities, who have not yet given him a response to guarantee his safety.

On 12 July Maykel sewed his mouth shut and tattooed "Patria y vida" (Homeland and life) in protest against the threats to his life from fellow inmates and state security agents that he has been receiving for months. The next day, the authorities removed the stitches from Maykel's mouth and informed him that, as punishment, he would be denied visits from his family.

He was placed in solitary confinement on 14 July. In his latest call to his friends on 18 July, Osorbo said: "It's not enough because I have enough strength to keep bleeding. I understand why they repress me, and I will continue to endure. A few days, nine months, or thirty years are not enough, as, in the end, since I was born, you have caused me harm. It's not enough that they lock me up in a prison, lying to my people, extorting my career. I prefer with great pride to descend in a coffin than to bow (...)."

Since May 2023, Amnesty International have denounced the threats to Maykel's life, but the Cuban authorities have ignored these calls.

**YOU CAN WRITE APPEALS IN:** Spanish or English

**SEND APPEALS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, AND NO LATER THAN:** November 2, 2023

**PREFERRED NAME AND GRAMMATICAL GENDER:** Maykel Castillo Pérez 'Maykel Osorbo' (male)