



Security Council

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Letter dated 18 May 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the following statement on human rights in Cuba issued on 13 May 2004 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I would be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Richard **Ryan**
Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations

Annex to the letter dated 18 May 2004 from the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English, French and Spanish]

Statement on human rights in Cuba issued on 13 May 2004 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union

The European Union is deeply concerned at the recent trials and sentencing of a further group of 13 Cuban human rights activists and journalists, all of whom were arrested while peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression, opinion, association and assembly, principles the European Union strongly defends.

The European Union strongly condemns the conduct of the trials, which once again failed to meet international standards in relation to due process. The European Union also deplores the disproportionate severity of the sentences handed down to the dissidents, viz. prison sentences of up to seven years for nine activists and house arrest for four others.

The European Union recalls the resolution on the situation of human rights in Cuba, adopted by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights on 15 April 2004, which deplored the events that occurred in Cuba in 2003 involving verdicts against certain political dissidents and journalists, a reference to the trials and sentencing of 75 dissidents in March and April 2003. The European Union calls on the Cuban authorities to release all prisoners of conscience and political prisoners without delay and joins the Commission on Human Rights in urging the Cuban authorities to cooperate with the Personal Representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

In the light of continuing disturbing reports that some dissidents have suffered from ill-treatment and ill-health, the European Union once again urges the Cuban authorities to comply with international human rights standards and norms for the treatment of prisoners.

The European Union will continue to monitor flagrant violations of fundamental civil and political rights by the Cuban authorities, which negatively affect relations and cooperation between the European Union and Cuba, and will take these violations into account in its re-evaluation of the common position on Cuba in June 2004.

The European Union's serious concerns, as outlined above, have been conveyed directly to the Cuban authorities.

The candidate countries Bulgaria and Romania, the countries of the stabilization and association process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.