

Miguel Díaz Canel
Presidente de la República de Cuba
Hidalgo, Esquina 6. Plaza de la Revolución
La Habana, CP 10400
KUBA

Dear President Díaz-Canel,

Maykel Castillo Pérez and Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara have been imprisoned since 2021 in connection with the peaceful protests that took place all over the country in July 2021. They are prisoners of conscience who are detained solely for exercising their right to freedom of expression.

On 8 March 2022, the Central Havana Popular Municipal Tribunal announced that oral hearings would soon start. The charges against the two men include "insults to symbols of the homeland", "resistance", "assault", "public disorder" as well as "defamation of institutions, organisations, heroes and martyrs". The prosecution has called for sentences of ten and eight years respectively.

Maykel Castillo Pérez's health seems to have further deteriorated while in prison, and Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara is also in bad health. Yet they are not receiving the medical treatment they need.

I therefore ask you to immediately release Maykel Castillo Pérez and Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara and to stop prosecuting them. Pending their release, please ensure that both men promptly get access to the medical treatment they need. Their trial must be independently monitored and they must in future be able to exercise their right to freedom of expression without undue restrictions.

Yours sincerely,

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