

APPENDIX A – NGOs Examined

I. The Center for Free a Cuba

1320 19th Street, NW
Suite 201
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 463-8430
www.cubacenter.org

Founded: 1987

Funding: USAID, the National Endowment for Democracy, undisclosed private sources

Mission/Objectives:

1. Supporting the creation of civil society and democracy in Cuba
2. Supporting a transition to a market economy
3. Supporting and advocating for human rights in Cuba

General Information:

The CFC currently has a staff of sixteen: six full-time and four part-time employees, as well as four interns. CFC's Director, Frank Calzon, has been accused of being a CIA agent. The organization's weekly e-mail update, This Week in Cuba, is sent to roughly one thousand readers in Spanish, an additional thousand in English, and filters to other readers through list serves. The CFC also occasionally holds public activities and public events to raise awareness of human rights issues on the island. These events are often held in conjunction with universities or other NGOs working on human rights issues. The events feature movies, authors or speakers that deal directly with human rights and human rights defenders in Cuba. Finally, the CFC occasionally holds photo exhibits to give a face to the repression. One such exhibit featured photos of fifty political prisoners and their relatives at the USAID Reagan Building.

II. Cuban American Bar Association

25 West Flagler Street
Suite 800
Miami, FL 33131
(305) 358-2800
www.cabaonline.com

Founded: 1974

Funding: Membership (\$60/year), undisclosed

Mission/Objectives: Unstated

General Information:

The Cuban American Bar Association (C.A.B.A.) is a voluntary, active bar association located in southern Florida that receives no funding from U.S. Government agencies. It

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presently has more than 1300 members, and although it has no staff, it is one of the larger voluntary bar associations in Florida. CABA undertakes activities which most bar associations also undertake: it works to inform communities about the qualifications of judicial candidates, voter education (without candidate endorsements); it coordinates annual golf tournaments, ski trips to Colorado, and a fundraising event titled “CABA Smoker” honoring Cuba’s cigar-making tradition.

CABA also maintains a tradition of advocacy for Cubans, Cuban dissidents and human rights defenders. One of the most notable examples was in 1994, when a group of CABA attorneys traveled to Cuba to ensure the legal rights of detained Cuban rafters on the Guantanamo Naval Base. CABA also undertook efforts on behalf of Juan Carlos Gonzalez Leiva, a blind lawyer from Ciego de Avila, Cuba. Gonzalez Leiva is president of the Cuban Foundation for Human Rights, which is located in Cuba. He was imprisoned with nine other individuals on March 4, 2002 for demonstrating against a beating inflicted on an independent Cuban journalist. He was charged on August 22, 2002 with “acts of disrespect towards Fidel Castro, public disorder, resisting authority and disobedience.” At the moment, CABA is facilitating communication to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights requesting assistance in connection with the arrest and detention on behalf of Juan Carlos Gonzalez Leiva.

Finally and more recently, C.A.B.A. worked with the American Bar Association to draft a letter to Cuban President Fidel Castro dated August 11, 2003. The letter cited general concern for human rights violations under Cuban customary international law and multilateral treaties following the March crackdown. The letter was written with particular concern for “independent, peaceful activists, including journalist, economists, labor leaders, librarians and human rights advocates, among them Marta Beatriz Roque, Oscar Espinosa Chepe, Raul Rivero, Hector Palacios, and Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet.”

III. Cuban American National Foundation

1312 SW 27th Avenue
Miami, FL 33145
(305) 592-7768
www.canfnet.org

Founded: 1981

Funding: Unknown

Affiliates: CANF Office in Washington, DC, CANF chapters in Chicago, Jacksonville, New Orleans, Los Angeles, New Jersey, Tampa, and Puerto Rico.

Mission/Objectives:

1. Maintaining regular contact with dissidents and human rights activists on the island to keep accurate information about such individuals and groups
2. Conducting vigorous advocacy and awareness campaigns throughout the world based on such information
3. Providing humanitarian assistance to individuals and groups on the island

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General Information:

The Cuban American National Foundation (CANF) is a nonprofit organization committed to promoting freedom and democracy in Cuba. CANF claims to be the largest Cuban organization in exile, with members around the world that represent a cross section of the Cuban exile community, as well as friends of Cuba.

CANF supports a non-violent transition to a pluralistic, market-based democracy in Cuba that is based on the rule of law and respect for human rights. CANF supports individuals in ways that do not aid or legitimize the current regime. CANF is in regular contact with independent groups, journalists and lawyers in order to maintain an accurate, comprehensive perspective of the situation in Cuba.

CANF's advocacy and awareness campaigns provide the international community with specific information on systematic violations of human rights in Cuba. This information is disseminated to governments and human rights organizations throughout the world. CANF's projects include substantial effort in sending humanitarian aid to the island. This aid has been used to supply individuals and families with much needed assistance, such as following Hurricane Andrew in 1992. CANF also initiated an 'adopt a dissident' program to support dissidents and their families. Since the March crackdown, the need for daily assistance has grown considerably.

IV. Cuban Research Institute, Florida International University

Florida International University
University Park Campus, DM 364
Miami, Florida 33199
(305) 348-1991
<http://lacc.fiu.edu/cri/>

Founded: Unknown

Funding: Unknown

Mission/Objectives:

1. Provide a forum for the exchange of ideas between academics and students in the United States and Cuba;
2. Host Cuban academicians at Florida International University for terms of teaching and research;
3. Provide FIU students the opportunity to study in Cuba and produce scholarly works relating to Cuba and the United States.

General Information:

The Cuban Research Institute (CRI) is an institute at Florida International University that focuses on scholarly exchange between U.S. and Cuban academics and students. In addition to student exchange programs, the CRI hosts colloquia on its campus with Cuban scholars on topics ranging from culture to politics, from U.S.-Cuba relations to Cuban Human Rights.

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V. Directorio Democrático Cubano

P.O. Box 110235
Hialeah, FL 33011
(305) 279-4416
www.directorio.org

Founded:

Funding: Subgrantee of USAID funding through the International Republican Institute

Affiliates:

Mission/Objectives:

1. Humanitarian and material support for pro-democracy organizations in Cuba
2. Exchange of information with the Cuban people
3. International solidarity with the pro-democracy movement in Cuba
4. Global awareness campaign based on access to dissidents and activists throughout Cuba
5. Publications, such as *Steps to Freedom*

General Information:

The Directorio Revolucionario Democrático Cubano (Directorio) is a non-profit organization that works for democracy in Cuba through civic nonviolent struggle. It is committed to the establishment of a Cuba where democracy and human rights are respected. It currently has four specific projects:

1. Project Help/Proyecto Auxilio: Proyecto Auxilio, or “Project Help” is a program through which volunteers can adopt Cuban political prisoners, communicate directly with these prisoners and/or their families, and send them \$50/month.
2. Project for Independent Libraries in Cuba: The Directorio gathers books and other supplies to send to independent libraries
3. The Centro de Estudios para una Opción Nacional (“Center for the Study of a National Option,” or “CEON,” its acronym in Spanish) is an affiliate project that attempts to restore and rebuild democratic roots from the Republic of Cuba. The project sponsors scholarship, research, and discussion on concepts related to Cuban democracy. It also purports to promote the study of democracy and of nonviolent civic resistance
4. The Directorio is an active supporter of Oswaldo Payá and Proyecto Varela.

The Directorio publishes *Steps to Freedom*, an annual survey of civic resistance throughout the island. If accurate, *Steps to Freedom* represents one of the most comprehensive compilation of human rights violations and positive advances in nonviolent civic resistance in Cuba. For example, the survey states there has been an aggregate growth in civic resistance actions for recent years.

VI. Encuentro (Asociación Encuentro de la Cultura Cubana)

Calle Infanta Mercedes 43, 1oA,

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28020 Madrid, Spain
(+34) 91-425-0404
www.cubaencuentro.com

Founded: 1996

Funding: Unknown

Mission/Objectives:

1. Encuentro will have a primary goal of establishing an open space in which to examine the national reality in Cuba.
2. In our pages will contain contributions from Cubans who live on the Island, from Cubans who live in other countries, and reflections of foreign intellectuals about our country and circumstances.

General Information:

Encuentro publishes a daily periodical on the Internet in Spanish language about the recent occurrences in Cuba. Further, it produces a substantial publication that is distributed three times per year. Since its inception, *Encuentro* has produced nineteen magazine editions. There is little information on the source of their information and even the editorial information is not disclosed.

VII. Free Cuba Foundation

Florida International University
University Park Campus
11200 SW 8th Street
Miami, FL 33199
(305) 348-2000
www.fiu.edu/~fcf/

Founded: 1994

Funding: USAID

Affiliates: Florida International University

Mission/Objectives:

1. Provide information on the situation inside of Cuba and the international community's relationship with the island.
2. Provide a platform for human rights and democracy activists to get their message out to the rest of the world.
3. Provide a means for the internet community to engage in campaigns to obtain the release of political prisoners or improve their conditions inside Cuba's prisons.

General Information:

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The Free Cuba Foundation (FCF) is a non-profit, and non-partisan organization whose purpose is to work towards the establishment of an independent and democratic Cuba using non-violent means. FCF bases its philosophical outlook on the works of Felix Varela, Jose Marti, Karl Popper, Edmund Burke, and Lord Acton. More specifically, the philosophical bases of FCF are free markets, permanent values, and limited government.

The Free Cuba Foundation was formed out of a union of Young Cuban Americans Freedom Foundation (YCAFF), Hijos del Exilio Cubano (Children of the Exile), Americans for a Free Cuba, and CubaWatch.

Free Cuba Foundation's Mission Statement is:

- We recognize that in these times of socio-political and economic collapse in Cuba;
- That the Opposition to Castro must be united in common cause against the unjust and totalitarian system in Cuba;
- That Socialism is a failed ideology due to its irrational and immoral nature;
- That Free Markets, when truly free, offer both liberty and an improving standard of living and these truths are backed up both empirically and theoretically;
- That over three decades of atheist and materialist ideology have devastated the ethical and material life in Cuba;
- That the revitalization of the moral and spiritual life of Cuba is necessary for the survival of the Cuban nation;
- That the Cuban Government's definition of social justice is legalized and collective robbery;
- That true social justice is the collectivization of individual justice that respects and defends absolutely life, liberty, and property;
- That Fidel Castro and his accomplices must be brought to justice;

Therefore the FREE CUBA Foundation shall compile and provide documentation of the crimes committed by the Castro regime against the Cuban people and those of other countries.

Furthermore the FREE CUBA Foundation shall work to: counter the network of Castro supporters in North America with accurate information on the true nature of the Castro tyranny, support measures to decentralize the Cuban economy, and provide information on how to operate a market system.

Finally the FREE CUBA Foundation aspires to do its part among the myriad of Exile organizations and exile leaders that have fought the good fight these past thirty years. Our goal is to serve as a catalyst and assist in speeding up the end of the Castro era and thus minimize the suffering of the Cuban people on the island and in the Diaspora.

VIII. Freedom House (Cuba Democracy Project & Transitions Project)

1319 18th Street NW
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 295-5101
www.freedomhouse.org/cdp

Founded: Freedom House, 1940s; Cuba Democracy Project, 1999

Funding: USAID, various private and public funders

Mission/Objectives:

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1. Supporting human rights defenders and civil society advocates through person-to-person visits
2. Raising international awareness of the situation of Cuban human rights defenders and activists
3. Maintaining an advocacy campaign on behalf of human rights and democracy movements in the US and around the globe

General Information:

The Cuba Democracy Project (CDP) attempts to support human rights and democracy activists in Cuba through person-to-person contact with counterparts from Europe and Latin America. The CDP targets independent journalists, human rights activists, and members of independent political parties, trade unions, and other organizations in Cuba for such contact. Through visits to Cuba, the CDP seeks to support capacity-building of activists and organizations in Cuba through training and education, material/technical support, as well as through personal and institutional links to counterparts around the globe. Training is geared towards assisting the creation of NGOs on the island with individuals who have had such experiences under other authoritarian regimes.

The CDP's advocacy and awareness campaigns are highly active around the world. With contacts in governments in the US, Europe, and Latin America, the CDP is capable of disseminating information to policymakers anywhere. The CDP also maintains contact and informs international human rights organs such as the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, the Commissioner's Personal Representative for Cuba, and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

The Transitions Project was USAID's first grant awarded under the Cuba Program. The Transitions Project provided 40,000 Spanish language books, pamphlets and other materials to Cubans on issues relating to human rights, transition to democracy and free market economics.

Freedom House publishes comprehensive surveys of democracy and human rights throughout the world including, *Freedom in the World*, *The World's Most Repressive Countries*, and *Press Freedom in the World*. The authors of this paper have benefited significantly from these and other publications by Freedom House. Indeed, Freedom House publications provide general and specific information, including comparative analysis, on the development of democracy, the rule of law and human rights in Cuba. The Freedom House publications, like those of Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, play an essential role in gathering, compiling, documenting and preserving records of human rights developments and violations in Cuba.

IX. Fundación Hispano Cubana

Calle Orfila 8, 1oA
Madrid, Espana,
(+34) 91-319-6313
www.hispanocubana.org

Founded: 1996

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Funding: Private donors

Affiliates: in New Jersey, Washington, DC, Florida, and Havana

Mission/Objectives:

1. Providing humanitarian aid to Cuba, supporting Cuban exiles in Spain, and the presentation of cultural displays and dissemination of information.
2. Promoting principles and values of liberty and democracy in all relations between Spain and Cuba, be they cultural, political, educational, mercantile, business or of a completely different nature.
- 3.

General Information:

The job of effecting a political transition to democracy in Cuba is for the Cubans, but in Spain and in America there is a substantial desire to support initiatives that defend human rights and fight for the reestablishment of liberty and democracy on the Island. FHC has established the “Friends of the FHC” program for those who materially sustain the Foundation. The FHC is a non-profit entity.

The FHC conducts conferences and seminars on the reality in Cuba and Cuba-Spain relations, bestows an annual International Human Rights Prize, publishes a monthly newsletter, and promotes and facilitates the transfer of information between Spain and Cuba. The FHC collaborates with the Ministry of Work and Social Issues to extend assistance globally to all Cuban and/or Spanish citizens that seek it. The FHC provides assistance on information and assessment of: residence and work permits; visa extensions; family reunification; political asylum; and visa procurement at Spanish Consulates, etc.

X. Grupo de Apoyo a la Democracia

1000 Ponce de Leon Blvd.
Coral Gables, FL 33134
(305) 648-3012
www.gadcuba.org

Founded: 1994

Funding: USAID, private sources

Mission/Objectives:

1. Provide material support to the growing number of dissident groups, and independent NGOs in Cuba, for the purpose of assisting with the organization and development of the different levels of the emergent civil society, a basic requirement for a peaceful and orderly transition to democracy.

General Information:

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The Group for Supporting Democracy is a non-profit organization founded in 1994 with the goal of providing logistical support to dissidents, opposition, political prisoners and their families and to all independent organizations inside Cuba. For many years known as “Grupo de Apoyo a la Disidencia,” Grupo de Apoyo a la Democracia's activities inside Cuba have resulted in the creation of an infrastructure encompassing all fourteen Cuban provinces and the Special Municipality of Isla de la Juventud. The supplies are handled by bona fide and widely recognized members of dissident groups, NGOs, and/or ex-political prisoners. Nothing is given to any governmental or official organization, but solely to victims of repression for their distribution to those they consider worthy of receiving the aid. GAD’s aid reaches dissident and human rights groups, fraternal and religious organizations through members of the opposition, independent professional associations such as the Colegio Medico Independiente de Santiago de Cuba, the Colegio Medico Nacional Independiente, the Instituto de Economistas Independientes de Cuba; independent workers unions such as the Colegio de Pedagogos Independientes (Independent Teachers Union), Consejo Unitario de Trabajadores Cubanos, Central Unida de Trabajadores de Cuba, veterans of international campaigns associated with the Círculo de Veteranos Independientes de Cuba, and political and ex-political prisoners and their families through the Fraternidad de Ex-Presos Politicos de Cuba, Frente Femenino Humanitario, and the Comité Cubano de Derechos Humanos y Reconciliación Nacional.

The material support given for the past seven years has been in the form of medical supplies and equipment, food, eyeglasses, office and electronic supplies such as speaker-phones, short-wave radios, faxes, word processors, video cameras, tape recorders, photographic cameras, clothing, and informational materials in the form of books, magazines, periodicals, and videos. More than 150,000 pounds of supplies have been successfully delivered to the Cuban dissidence and independent NGOs since the beginning of the program of humanitarian aid to Cuban democratic activists.

The recipients of GAD aid are: those organizations primarily involved with the defense of human rights, civil liberties, and the promotion of democratic values; organizations providing material support to political prisoners and their families; independent clinics headed by qualified medical personnel; GAD’s Humanitarian Assistance Groups (Grupos de Ayuda Humanitaria) and Independent Pharmacies Project;

GAD has always maintained an aggressive policy of seeking private donations, both in medications and cash, having received almost \$1,500,000 worth of audited in-kind donations. Distribution is reaching more than 90 percent of Cuba’s municipalities. The creation and growth of the Project of Independent Clinics, started in Santiago de Cuba in 1999 in a very modest way, and now with fully operative independent clinics in six municipalities.

XI. Institute for Cuban and Cuban American Studies

1531 Bescia Avenue
P.O. Box 248174
Coral Gables, FL 33124-3010
(305) 284-2822
www.miami.edu.iccas

Founded: 1999

Funding: USAID, other sources

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Affiliates: University of Miami, School of International Studies; partner with the Directorio Democrático Cubano

Mission/Objectives:

1. Preserve, teach, and disseminate the history and culture of Cuba;
2. Provide research and information about contemporary Cuba, U.S.-Cuba relations, and Cuban-Americans;
3. Increase awareness and appreciation of Cuba nationally and internationally;
4. Identify and assess the challenges to a democratic transition in a post-Castro Cuba;
5. Create a comprehensive database on Cuba's economy, demography, communications and physical infrastructure; and
6. Implement a professional development and education component

General Information:

The Institute for Cuban and Cuban American Studies (ICCAS) was established in 1999 as a part of the University of Miami's School of International Studies. There are between thirty and forty professors and scholars who are associated with the Institute. An integral component of the Institute is the Cuba Transition Project (CTP), which was launched in 2002 and is funded by a grant from USAID. CTP is designed to undertake preparations for a free and democratic Cuba by providing a future Cuban regime alternative recommendations and proposals on transition issues, drawing on Eastern European experiences and the lessons of Nicaragua.

According to Mr. Hans Desaladelvalle, the Institute "has become a local, national and international center for the study and dissemination of Cuban history and culture." The Institute is a focal point for the research and study of Cuban and Cuban-American issues. It regularly sponsors public events, such as luncheons, lectures, academic conferences, film festivals, musical events and art exhibits. The Institute also gathers materials for the Cuban Heritage Collection at the University of Miami library. As part of an academic institution, the Institute offers courses about Cuba both for credit and not for credit, and publishes materials about Cuba. Finally, it serves as "an educational link between the university, the Cuban exile community, and the South Florida community at-large."

CTP brings together a number of leading scholars on Cuba and Cuban issues who analyze obstacles and issues that Cuba will face in transitioning from the current regime to a democratic, market-based society. Other issues such as Cuban foreign policy and Cuban contemporary affairs are monitored on a daily basis. The scholars make practical policy recommendations. CTP also publishes periodic newsletters on contemporary Cuban affairs (economic, social, cultural).

CTP analyzes legal and human rights issues, which are addressed by an in-house research associate. They have published two items on such matters: the rule of law and independent judiciary. Both pieces were broad. The CTP also considers other issues related to human rights, such as Proyecto Varela. Finally, the CTP created a database of all known and documented political prisoners. These are the immediate projects that touch on human rights and legal issues related to Cuba. There are some images and photos of the political prisoners that are supposed to put a face to named prisoners.

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The Institute holds monthly speakers, presentations, and cultural events, all of which are broader than CTP events. CTP infrequently holds events, as well as annual ‘transition’ conferences in Washington, D.C. The next such conference will address humanitarian issues for transition, including immediate humanitarian concerns and issues.

XII. The International Committee for Democracy in Cuba

Sokolska 18
120 00 Prague 2
Czech Republic
(+420) 226-200-400
www.cubanuestra.nu/web/article.asp?artID=1592

Founded: September 2003

Funding: Unknown

Affiliates: People in Need Foundation

Mission/Objectives:

Short-term:

1. Promote activities to support Cuban prisoners of conscience and the families of these prisoners;
2. Support and promote the Varela Project, Independent Libraries Movement, independent journalists, independent labor activists and other civil society groups inside Cuba;
3. Continue to pressure on the Cuban regime for the release of political prisoners and the opening of dialogue between the regime and the opposition;
4. Create a European Fund for Democracy in Cuba;
5. Nominate Oswaldo Paya Sardinias for the Nobel Peace Prize;

Long-term:

1. Make public statements on events in Cuba
2. Create a committee on Cuban transition of experts who participated in transition in Central and Eastern Europe. The committee will also lobby European foreign ministries to alter their policies on Cuba to limit support for the Castro regime
3. Send funds and information to activists who fight for freedom in Cuba.
4. Organize trips to Cuba for parliamentarians and journalists
5. Produce a Cuban radio news program that will be transmitted via shortwave radio for official networks such as Radio Exterior in Spain, Radio Prague, and Radio Netherlands.
6. Organize public discussions on Cuba, especially in light of the “Arcos Principles”
7. Inform European and Latin American public opinion on Cuban interests
8. Create an award for the person or entity that best contributes to freedom in Cuba.

General Information:

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The People in Need Foundation (PINF) was instrumental in founding the International Committee for Democracy in Cuba (ICDC). The ICDC was founded by prominent diplomats and political leaders to further assist Cuban dissidents and others working for democracy in Cuba. The ICDC seeks to show political solidarity with democracy and human rights activists in Cuba and filter material and financial support to Cuba's democratic opposition. It also plans to assist human rights initiatives in Cuba and to alter the approach of European and western hemisphere countries towards Castro's government.

The ICDC is based in Prague and maintains a secretariat in the PINF. Its members include prominent individuals from around the world: Madeleine Albright (USA), Elena Bonner (Russian Federation/USA), Philip Dimitrov (Bulgaria), Milan Figel (Slovakia), Arpad Goncz (Hungary), Vaclav Havel (The Czech Republic), Enrique Krauze (Mexico), Mart Laar (Estonia), Vargas Llosa (Peru), Cecilia Malmström (Sweden), Markus Meckel (Germany), Adam Michnik (Poland), and Karel Schwarzenberg (The Czech Republic).

XIII. Movimiento por la Paz, el Desarme, y la Libertad

Calle San Agustín, 3 - 3º,
28014 Madrid, Spain
(+34) 91-429-7644
www.mpd.org

Founded: 1981

Funding: Unknown

Affiliates: MPDL maintains twenty-three offices in Spain, one in Belgium, and has programs in twenty countries throughout Central and South America, Africa, Eastern Europe and South Asia.

Mission/Objectives:

1. Promote initiatives whose object is the diffusion of peace, disarmament and liberty, based on principles of solidarity, tolerance and equality;
2. Reconstruct homes and infrastructure and supporting initiatives to improve agricultural production;
3. Focused on the most vulnerable populations in La Habana, Pinar del Rio and Isla de la Juventud;
4. Bring humanitarian aid to individuals displaced by Hurricane Michelle.

General Information:

MPDL started as a pacifist social movement championing a nuclear-free Europe, rejecting the policy of nuclear blocks and defending Human Rights. With the subsequent social transformations and the development of the new international scene, MPDL became more involved in humanitarian aid and development cooperation.

MPDL's work takes account of the coordinated approach to the different steps in the international action: from humanitarian intervention and assistance to victims of natural catastrophes, to rehabilitation and promoting self-sufficiency.

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As a consultative organization of the United Nations and member of the Human Rights Federation in Spain, MPDL defends Human Rights in all its activities. Within this specific field, MPDL is a member of the Spanish Platform of the International Criminal Court, together with the International Coalition of NGOs. Its NGO has signed a Framework Partnership Agreement with ECHO (European Cooperation Humanitarian Office), and is an active member of VOICE, the network of European humanitarian NGOs. Finally MPDL is a member of SOLIDAR, the alliance of NGOs working in development and humanitarian aid, social policy and social service provision.

MPDL is supported by 5,000 members and by the work of volunteers, whose contributions are absolutely essential for the daily work of a non-governmental organization. MPDL publishes quarterly reports on development, international crises, and human rights violations.

XIV. People in Need Foundation

Czech TV Foundation
Sokolska 18
120 00 Prague 2
Czech Republic
(+420) 226-200-400
www.pinf.cz/english/

Founded: 1992

Funding: Various sources – see General Information below.

Mission/Objectives:

1. Support dissidents and independent journalists within Cuba;
2. Distribute humanitarian, technical and financial support to dissidents and their families, relatives of imprisoned individuals, and to sick and incapacitated Cubans;
3. Gather and disseminate information regarding conditions in Cuba and conduct awareness campaigns regarding the same in Prague.

General Information:

The People in Need Foundation (PINF) is a nongovernmental organization based in Prague, Czech Republic. Its mission is “to inspire a largeness of spirit in Czech society by helping others in need, and to promote democratic freedom for all.” PINF has provided more than \$17 million in assistance to 25 countries of the world. PINF is highly regarded within Czech society for its efforts and accomplishments, receiving the Czech Foreign Ministry's “*Gratias Agit* award in 1997 for outstanding contributions to the image of the Czech Republic's abroad,” as well as the Democracy and Civil Society award in 1998 given by the U.S. and European Union.

PINF regularly works with a variety of partners on its projects. These partners include agencies at the UN (UNICEF, UNHCR and WFP), private relief organizations (Mercy Corps, and the International Rescue Committee), civic and cultural associations, and independent media. PINF also receives private, corporate and public funding for its projects. In particular, PINF

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receives funding from its co-founder, Czech Television, as well as from the City of Prague, the Open Society Fund, the Foundation for Civil Society (Phare), the Charles S. Mott Foundation, and the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy.

PINF first undertook activities in Cuba in 1997, giving the organization eight¹ full years of experience on the island. During that time, PINF has supported Cuban dissidents and the independent journalists on its own and through collaborative efforts with other international organizations. PINF has identified and worked with more than four dozen individuals to distribute humanitarian, technical and financial support to dissidents and their families, relatives of imprisoned individuals, and to sick and incapacitated Cubans. PINF collaborators also gather first-hand information on the situation in Cuba during their visits, which is then disseminated through the PINF website and other channels.

PINF has coordinated direct support for Cubans dissident by organizing an awareness campaign in Prague. In 1999, PINF organized a photo exhibition that focused on imprisoned Cuban dissidents. It has also sponsored a number of visits to the Czech Republic by Cuban dissidents. These visitors included: Elizardo Sanchez, a prominent Cuban dissident and human rights defender, who met with President Vaclav Havel and top officials in the Czech Republic; Alina Fernandez, daughter of Fidel Castro, who leads an open struggle against the dictatorship of her own father, was the main guest at the 1st international documentary film festival on human rights, One World. In 1999, PINF awarded Oswaldo Paya Sardinias, a Cuban dissident, its Homo Homini human rights award, which was presented to him in Cuba.

Following the March crackdown against dissidents in Cuba, PINF developed a more focused, comprehensive initiative called “The Cuba Project” to address the humanitarian and human rights crisis in Cuba. It has also formed a Czech-Cuban Committee that’s primary objective is the establishment of an adoption program for the families of political prisoners (\$50 monthly contribution for a minimum of one year).

In order to raise awareness of human rights violations in Cuba, PINF holds photo exhibits, such as pictures of relatives of political prisoners in Cuba that were exhibited in The House of Representatives, in Washington D.C., during the 40th anniversary of Castro's seizure of power. Many of those pictures have been used in several awareness and advocacy campaigns on behalf of the democratic opposition and the political prisoners.

Along with Czech Television, filmmaker Petr Jancarek shot the documentary film “Voces de la Isla de la libertad” (Voices from the Island of Liberty), which has been screened in prestigious international events, such as the last visit of President Vaclav Havel to the United States.

PINF also worked to nominate Oswaldo Paya Sardinias for the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize. The petition drive gathered signatures from 461 dignitaries and diplomats from around the world, including Vaclav Havel, 8 former presidents, 2 former heads of state, 3 current prime ministers, 3 former prime ministers and even Madeleine Albright.² The petition drive and nomination raised global awareness of Paya’s efforts as a dissident, the Varela Project and the situation of dissidents throughout Cuba. Paya’s position, therefore, has significantly changed whether he wins the Nobel Prize or not, as a result of PINF and organizations that contributed to the petition.

¹ As of the date of this publication.

² People in Need Foundation, Cuba Project, *available at* <http://www.clovekvtisni.cz/english/humanitarnipomoc/cuba/international.php>.