

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 21, 2018

President Donald Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to commend your expressions of solidarity with courageous pro-democracy activists who continue to strive for freedom despite decades of oppression after winning independence. We also appreciate your policy of tightening restrictions on the brutal regime that suppresses dissent and perpetuates egregious human rights abuses.

In the spirit of Cuban Independence Day, we urge you to consider new, additional actions to hold the Castro regime accountable for its crimes. For that reason, within all applicable rules and regulations, we urge you to direct the Department of Justice to review whether Raúl Castro should be indicted for the illegal and heinous act of shooting down in international waters two American civilian aircraft flown by Brothers to the Rescue on February 24, 1996.

Brothers to the Rescue was a humanitarian organization that operated rescue missions to search for Cubans who fled the island by sea. The journey from Cuba is treacherous, and many have perished in the attempt. On February 24, 1996, the Cuban Air Force—unprovoked and without warning—shot-down two unarmed Brothers to the Rescue planes in international waters, murdering three American citizens, Carlos Costa, Armando Alejandro, Jr., and Mario de la Peña, as well as one United States legal permanent resident, Pablo Morales.

Following the shoot-down, a U.S. federal court indicted the head of the Cuban Air Force, General Rubén Martínez Puente, and the two MiG pilots, Lorenzo Alberto Pérez-Pérez and Francisco Pérez-Pérez, on charges of murder. In addition, a member of the WASP spy ring ultimately was convicted for conspiracy to commit murder for his role in planning the shoot-down, and was sentenced to life in federal prison. Shamefully, the previous administration, as part of its appeasement policy, commuted his sentence and let him return to a hero's welcome in Cuba. However, the Cuban operative ultimately responsible, then-Minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces Raúl Castro, was never indicted.

We therefore urge you to direct the Department of Justice to reconsider whether Raúl Castro should be indicted for the murder of innocent Americans. In addition, we urge you to direct the appropriate agencies to assess whether INTERPOL “red notices” should be issued for the arrest and extradition to the United States of all Cuban operatives responsible for their murders.

Taking these bold actions would demonstrate to our adversaries that they cannot act with impunity against Americans, and that human rights abusers and criminals will be held accountable for their crimes. Most importantly, it would send a signal to the Cuban people that the United States will not permit their oppressors to operate without consequences.

As we commemorate Cuban Independence Day, we continue to demand freedom, accountability, and justice for the Cuban people. We remember those who suffered immeasurable losses, such as members of the Brothers to the Rescue who were murdered while on a humanitarian mission to save Cuban lives. The time for holding the Cuban regime for these and many other crimes is long overdue.

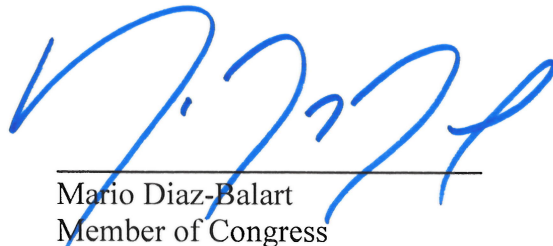
Thank you for your consideration of these important matters. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



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Marco Rubio  
U.S. Senator



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Mario Diaz-Balart  
Member of Congress