

Remarks of Rosa María Payá as prepared for delivery on April 9, 2013:

Dear friends, thank you so much, it is my pleasure to be here.

5 years ago my father and the Christian Liberation Movement delivered a project of changes to the law called, Heredia Project or Law of National Reunion. It calls for the fundamental and basics rights that we don't have in Cuba. It calls for the recognition of the rights of the Cuban exiles and their sons. It calls for the right to have internet access, it calls for the right to travel freely, it calls for the stop of discrimination of Cubans inside their own island and to no Cuban could be named illegal in his own country.

4 years ago the Cuban government started a process of reforms, which are curiously a series of concessions touching the same points of the Heredia Project, but without empowering the people with their rights.

I would be nice if the Cuban government were making democratic reforms.

But that's not true because these reforms have not given human rights to the Cuban citizens.

I would be nice if Cubans could travel freely

But they can't, because the government has to allow the persons to obtain their passport and this is conditioned

It would be nice if the economic reforms were delivered the self-management to the citizens.

But that's not true because Cubans are not free to make business with everybody in any moment.

It would be nice if the Cuban government were opening a transition process

But that's not true because the repression against the members of our movement and all the opposition has increased

It would be nice if the Cuban government were peaceful and respectful

But that's not true because the state security of this government calls my family's house to say "I'm going to kill you". They did before my father's death and they still do it.

I'm sorry but things are not nice right now in my country, although a lot of Cubans are working for the real changes and this is definitely the nice part.

My father Oswaldo Paya and Harold Cepero dedicated their lives to fight for the democracy of Cuba. They were working on effective and peaceful alternatives, instruments that can be implemented during the transition process. They were strongly denouncing the Fraud Change that is taking place in the island, and what is the Fraud Change?

The Fraud Change is this big process in which the Cuban government and its accomplices have developed a series of legal reforms and public messages designed to preserve its power and authority. They are trying to sell to the international community false images of opening wide, at the same time, the violent aggressions against the opposition members and their families have increased. These new laws, not only confirm the government's control, they also maintain the discrimination

against Cuban citizens and definitely do not guarantee the citizen's rights.

We are not against economical agreements; we are against these agreements over the discrimination of the Cuban people. Economic reform by itself, without the recognition of rights, doesn't bring democracy because business will be made excluding the citizens and condemning them to the false transition. There are enough Russias and Chinas in the world we don't want this future to our nation. We want to participate in the design of our future. That way the majority of the Cuban democratic movement inside and outside of Cuba is supporting the Path of the People, expressing the fact that the opposition is united in its objectives. The Path of the People demands fundamental rights which the Cuban people lack, and suggests elemental steps to obtain them. It is a vision of the whole transition process. This real transition is the one that should be supported by the international community.

Cuban people do not need external solutions. Cubans have enough resources, capacities and imaginations to build a prosperous nation but they need the human rights to be able of do it. My country do not have to depend on Venezuela or any other powerful *sponsor* what we need is democracy.

We have a proposal to get it, and not just us, this is the proposal of the Cuban people. More than 25,000 Cubans are demanding for 10 years now a referendum, to ask to the people if they want the rights.

If they want free expression

If they want free association

If they want the freedom for political prisoners

If they want to have they own business

If they want free elections

But the Cuban government violates his own constitution and still don't answer the call of the people. Neither the call of the opposition which is united in its objective of liberty through the initiative called the path of the People.

As my father said more than 10 years ago "I do not come here to ask for support for the opposition to the Cuban government, not to condemn those that persecute us. There is not a support for Cuba that from ideological positions, some in the world take the side of the Cuban government or the side of those who oppose this government. We want to the world take a position in favor of the Cuban people, **with all Cubans**. And that means supporting respect for their rights; to support an opening, to support the demand to consult our people at the polls about the changes we are demanding. We call for solidarity to give voice to our people at the polls, as it is proposed by the Varela Project"

Today my father's voice reminds us all that dictatorships have no political color: not right or left, they are only dictatorships.

Cubans are entitled to the rights and this is a more human than political. Stop condemning the Cuban people on behalf of myths or ideologies. We have the right to the same civil rights as the Americans or the Spanish or the Koreans because we are human beings.

We are looking for a real transition to democracy and we are working for a reconciliation process to guaranty that this process be pacific and good for everybody. But this cannot be built on

forced oblivion of the past or is not real. We must start from forgiveness and the necessary recognition of the whole truth.

We have confirmed facts that indicate that my father and my dear friend didn't die as a consequence of an accident. We have already published text messages from the survivors that say that another car hit them from behind and I have already seen the young man who was driving and he confirmed us that it was not an accidental.

We are calling for an international investigation because we have the right to know the truth but also because we have to prevent this tragedy from happening again.

The Cuban people are in a really dangerous moment because the repression from the government against any kind of alternative voice is rising. We need for the international community to pay attention and helps us to stop the impunity of the government inside the island. We have to protect those who are in Cuba fighting for everybody's rights.

This is a dangerous moment but it is also a moment of hope. It is time to put our differences apart and to push together all Cubans and all the friends of freedom for an inclusive dialog and for the respect of the human rights in the island, supporting the solutions that the people in Cuba have demanded. It is time for a referendum, it is time for the truth, it is time for democracy. It's the time of the Liberation.

Thank you so much.

