

In the Spirit of Nelson Mandela
Proposal to Campaign the U.N. International Jurists
to Initiate a Formal Investigation on
United States Human Rights of Political Prisoners

In the last couple of years, we've witnessed the release of a few political prisoners after long, hard-fought battles. We also know many more were denied release after winning court battles, like Sundiata Acoli, Veronza Bowers and Dr. Mutulu Shakur. Either the court decided they should be released and the Parole Departments appealed, preventing release, or the Parole Board granted release, and state apparatus appealed to annul those decisions. In either case, our comrades continue to languish in prison, as these decisions leave few, if any, avenues of recourse to remedy the situation.

On the other hand, we have witnessed and celebrate the tremendous victories like the release of the Cuban Five, and the recent release of Oscar Lopez Rivera. His being granted clemency is one in a long line of clemency successes for Puerto Rican Independentistas. The broad-based international support for the Puerto Rican independence movement speaks loudly to the lesson of a unified and uniform determination. We must seek the wherewithal to replicate their organizational success in our continued struggle to win the release of our incarcerated comrades. As we congratulate and celebrate the release of Oscar, it is extremely important to encourage that body of activists to join in our fight in international solidarity. His victory is our victory, and our continued fight should be their continued fight!

In this regard, I have been reflecting on our past successes, particularly having the United Nations International Jurists tour and interview a number of our political prisoners. Following the visits, the International Jurists reported to the U.N. Subcommittee on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities that political prisoners exist in the United States. Soon thereafter, the late and honored Fidel Castro, the President of Cuba, offered, on December 24, 1977, to make an exchange of prisoners held in Cuba for our captured revolutionaries. Unfortunately, we did not have the fortitude or organizational capacity to demand this exchange be made—to force the issue with the U.S. corporate government.

Some of the comrades interviewed by the International Jurists 35 years ago still languish in prison today. Therefore, I would like to propose it is time to organize a new international campaign to persuade the U.N. International Jurists to initiate a formal investigation. This investigation would be based on discovering U.S. Human Rights violations as they pertain to our long-held political prisoners.

I am proposing this campaign be organized under the slogan of "In the Spirit of Nelson Mandela," as it is believed this slogan will resonate with progressives around the world. It will inspire them in international solidarity to join our efforts to persuade the U.N. International Jurists to initiate this call for a needed investigation. Some of you may be aware the recently departed U.N. Rapporteur, Juan Mendez, successfully had a report and recommendation accepted by the U.N. General Assembly condemning the U.S. policy and practice on punitive solitary confinement. The U.N. General Assembly now identifies this accepted condemnation and recommendation as the "Nelson Mandela Rule." It would be politically and strategically advantageous for our campaign to build on Juan Mendez' success with our organizing slogan "In the Spirit of Nelson Mandela." This is especially significant since many of our imprisoned

comrades suffer the punitive conditions of solitary confinement. When giving consideration to the [New York Times December 4th](#) and [5th, 2016](#), special report on the racial discrimination in disciplinary practices in the N.Y.S. Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, we know the “Mandela Rule” has been violated. In fact, I am writing this proposal from N.Y.S. (Southport) premiere gulag—in solitary confinement for a bogus disciplinary Tier III hearing in stark violation of the “Nelson Mandela Rule.”

Therefore, it is anticipated the organizing of this proposal will permit us to accomplish the following:

1. Build a national determination focused on petitioning the International Jurists to initiate a Human Rights violation investigation;
2. Create a political environment to build international solidarity among progressives around the world in support of our political prisoners;
3. Build a media/propaganda campaign in support of this determination giving greater recognition to our political prisoners and the conditions of their imprisonment;
4. Expose U.S. hypocrisy on U.S. human rights record, and its continued violation of the “Mandela Rule”;
5. Strengthen our capacity to represent our political prisoners, broadening the base of unity and support among the New Afrikan/Black, Native American, Puerto Rican, Chicano/Mexicano, and Euro-American, etc., anti-racist and anti-imperialist trends in the overall struggle;
6. Have the U.N. International Jurists report to the U.N. General Assembly, hence to the world, the U.S. human rights violations as they specifically pertain to the existence of U.S. political prisoners;
7. The report by the International Jurists to be used for the development of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission with international observers to remedy the COINTELPRO persecutions and convictions.

The proposal tasks us to formulate and structure an organizational determination and action plan to possibly form a Coalition on Human Rights for Political Prisoners. Such Coalition would be comprised of representatives of our political prisoners, human rights advocates, legal representatives, progressive organizations, and faith-based groups.

In closing, after careful review, I ask this proposal be copied, widely distributed and posted for discussing toward implementation. Again, with the success of Oscar and the recent release of a few political prisoners, it is time to step up our fight for freedom “In the Spirit of Nelson Mandela.”

Remember: We Are Our Own Liberators!

Revolutionary Love & Unity

Jalil A. Muntaqim

March 13, 2017

Southport Gulag