

# Message to the Intellectuals and Leaders of the Black Movement in the Americas who Condemn Racism in Cuba

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

My African roots have enriched my life, particularly the historical legacy of the Black Movement and its dignified struggle for civil rights and racial integration. The work of prominent personalities like Marcus Garvey, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, and Nelson Mandela are references that sustain the ideals that motivate my work on behalf of equal rights and opportunities for progress for all human beings.

Lamentably, under the current political system, which curtails individual freedoms, we Cubans suffer the scourge of discrimination. In this context, we blacks are victims of the worst of circumstances.

Even beyond the influence that any cultural component has on the illegal and immoral practice of racism, our country has seen the institutionalization of patterns [of behavior] that reinforce the notion of white supremacy. This undermines the self-esteem of black Cubans. The 'law of dangerousness' [a racial profiling law] and Article 5 of the Cuban Constitution are the best evidence of this institutionalized racism. The State does

not permit the creation of public spaces, open to absolutely all citizens, for the purpose of debating the race problem. Neither does it adopt policies to address solutions to this scourge. Meanwhile, the mostly likely opportunities for the blacks and *mestizos* who make up our island's mixed society are employment in the worse paid jobs, living in the unhealthiest neighborhoods, representing a large portion of the prison population, and other similar vicissitudes.

The solidarity expressed in your Declaration, in which you condemn the systematic violation of civil rights in Cuba, and particularly the marginalization of black Cubans, is a relevant and important fact and deed for the history of Cuba.

I want to express to you my deepest gratitude and admiration for your supportive actions. They are reviving our hopes.

My sincerest regards. May God bless you.

Dr. Darsi Ferrer Ramírez  
Valle Grande prison

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