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“United We Stand, Divided We Fall”

This adage has been echoed throughout history in one manner or another. United we stand means more today than it ever has before.

One of my goals is for this Note to serve as a window to give you the opportunity to look out into the world and see significant events that are occurring. Many times, faced with your own day to day struggles for freedom, you may believe that you are the only one fighting these battles. But you are not alone! There is an incredible amount of civil unrest emerging throughout the world right now. The world has seen revolts against oppressors spread like wildfire. Millions of people have united to peacefully petition their Government for relief from inhumane treatment, however, many times to no avail. Many have taken a stand to peacefully and openly protest by taking their problems to the streets in an effort to draw the attention of the Government and the world to their plight. However, when Governments fail to heed the cry of its citizens, the Government invites revolution.

For example, in December 2010, the revolution in Tunisia tossed out former President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, ending his 23 year reign. The Tunisian revolt was sparked by limited freedom of speech, widespread unemployment, and political corruption. Following in Tunisia’s footsteps were the people of Egypt. On January 25th, Egyptian protestors took to the streets of Cairo in an effort to dismantle Hosni Mubarak’s regime. After an 18-day protest that tallied at least 365 reported deaths and injuring thousands, the people of Egypt finally managed to run Mubarak out of office, ending his 30-year presidency. Along with those two revolutions, there have also been revolts in Algeria, Yemen, Jordan, Bahrain, Iraq, Mauritania, Pakistan and Libya.

Citizens in Southern Sudan successfully voted for independence in a referendum. Results posted on February 7th, 2011, indicated that 98.83% voted in favor of splitting from Sudan. Israel was one of the first countries to welcome South Sudan after it declared independence on July 9th. While protesters in the Ivory Coast helped remove former President Laurent Gbagbo from power early this year. Street protests had been building since incumbent president Gbagbo refused to leave office after losing re-election on November 28th, 2010, to now-president Alassane Ouattara. Gbagbo was apprehended in April 2011 with the help of French peacekeepers, ending a political stalemate that pushed the country to the brink of civil war.

While I am not advocating violence to resolve issues, the lesson from these revolts is that unity is a must; it is required to advance ones cause and is a must to achieve your goal. These revolutions clearly show the power possessed by the people when they are united in their pursuit for freedom.

In the words of Henry Ford,¹

“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.”

So I call upon all individuals and organizations in Cuba that understand the need for change to work together towards this noble goal. As Benjamin Franklin said,²

“We must indeed all hang together, or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately.”

1-Henry Ford (July 30, 1863 – April 7, 1947) was a prominent American industrialist, the founder of the Ford Motor Company, and sponsor of the development of the assembly line technique of mass production.

2-Benjamin Franklin (January 17, 1706 – April 17, 1790) was one of the Founding Fathers of the United States. A noted polymath, Franklin was a leading author, printer, political theorist, politician, postmaster, scientist, musician, inventor, satirist, civic activist, statesman, and diplomat