

April 7, 2008

Information on Incarceration Conditions and Health of Dr. Oscar Elías Biscet, Cuban Prisoner of Conscience

Dr. Biscet is still imprisoned in cell 1232, located on the second floor of the south wing of building #1, in the Combinado del Este, a maximum security prison located on the outskirts of the City of Havana.

Health Status

Personal Medical History (PMH) Chronic Noninfectious Conditions which the patient suffers:

Stage III essential hypertension (supposedly treated with atenolol, 1 tablet (100 mg) daily and clortalidona 1 tablet 25 mg), daily. Both medications are brought to him from home. This treatment has been in place since 1989 when hypertension was diagnosed, as per medical history prior to his imprisonment.

Gastroduodenal ulcer

Familial hypercholesterolemia

Lumbar scoliosis and generalized arthritis

Neither treatment nor medical follow up are in place for any of the above mentioned conditions.

Current Health Status

During the regularly scheduled visit on March 27th, the following were observed:

Chronic oral sepsis. Dr. Biscet advised that during the month of February, he presented another oral abscess and several painful bouts of inflammation and lost one more tooth. He has lost a total of 15 teeth, either partially or totally.

During the past six months, his weight has dropped 40 pounds. He continues to refuse medical and dental attention from military doctors. He alleges that he does not trust these doctors to follow the established Medical Ethics Codes in his particular case. He seems to be doing well both psychologically and spiritually. On December 4, 2007, Dr. Biscet was taken to the Hospital Civil Oftalmológico where in our presence they performed a visual test to indicate the lenses required due to the loss of vision he presented (we were present when all of this took place.)

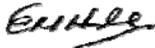
Incarceration conditions

Dr. Biscet is kept in rigorous severe Phase II incarceration conditions. He is allowed two hour duration family visits every two months during which he is permitted to receive personal hygiene items and food as stipulated in the institution's policies. He is allowed three hour duration marital visits every three months and one hundred minutes of authorized telephone calls a month. He is taken out for sun exposure twice a week but has not been allowed on the field to walk in the outdoors during the past month. The cell in which he lives has adequate dimensions and white washed walls but lacks a locker for personal belongings. The cell has artificial lighting and is ventilated only by the air which goes through the cracks on the walls. The cell door is open from outside once a day by an officer of the prison. The cell view consists of a cement wall; The cot on which he sleeps is a piece of wood covered by a thin and deteriorated mattress.

The cell is always humid. He must wash and hang his belongings inside the cell; water for consumption is stagnant and at room temperature. Medication, literature, correspondence and family pictures must be turned over to the officers who supervise visits to be checked by them away from our presence and for them to decide what can be given to my husband so it can be taken to his cell. My husband was sentenced to twenty five years in prison at the time of the "Causa de los 75" (persecution of the 75 dissidents) in April 2003. He was arrested by the political police on December 6, 2002. He was held prisoner temporarily for four months prior to the trial. Before that, on October 31, 2002, he had been released from having served a three year sentence in a maximum security prison in the province of Holguin located 768 kilometers from City of Havana where he resided. The time served was for the same reason that he is incarcerated today. This year, my husband will have served 9 years of imprisonment. The negative changes in his health are due to his prolonged imprisonment and the poor life conditions in prison.

Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet is a Cuban Human Rights activist. He has presided over the ONG (Non Governmental Organization) Lawton Foundation for Human Rights. His only crimes have been to oppose abortion and the death penalty and to proclaim and defend the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to have employed non violent means in his struggle. Since 1999, Amnesty International declared him to be a prisoner of conscience. The Cuban government recently signed Pactos Internacionales de Derechos Cívicos Sociales y Culturales. Unfortunately, the agreements were not put into practice. Therefore, the imprisonment and incarceration conditions to which my husband is being subjected are arbitrary. In advance, I would like to express my gratitude to the international community, non governmental organizations of human rights, civic and religious institutions, and people of good will for interceding on behalf of the immediate and unconditional release from prison of my husband and all Cuban political prisoners and prisoners of conscience.

Sincerely,



Registered Nurse: Elsa Morejon Hernandez, Cuban human rights activist and wife of Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet Gonzalez, prisoner of conscience and President of the Lawton Foundation for Human Rights.

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cc. Dr. Angel Ernesto Garrido, Vice President of the Lawton Foundation for Human Rights and representative outside of Cuba of Dr. Oscar Elias Biscet.
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