

Open Letter to International Community and the Non-Governmental Rights

February 27, 2007

Open Letter to the International Community, Medical doctors, and Non-governmental Human Rights Organizations

"It is very difficult for common prisoners to serve a prison sentence; all the more so for a peaceful man incarcerated for exercising his right to think freely. Everything has been so excessive and arbitrary that, the tribunal that condemned me, did not pronounce a sentence until three days after the hearing had concluded. At that moment, I felt their disloyalty to justice. I am convinced today of the fear they felt when they convicted an innocent man and sent him away to live with the scum of society. During all these years in prison, I have witnessed ignominious things of which I cannot give details due to their perversion; acts that threaten the decorous behavior of a civilized society. In spite of the difficult situation, I am not frightened, nor will I go back a step backwards in my thinking. I am here of my own free will, to condemn and not to retract myself, and will serve this unjust sentence until God, the Almighty, puts an end to it. Dr. Oscar Elías Biscet, January 23, 2007. (Fragments of a letter written to wife Elsa Morejón which she received on February 9, 2007.)

Incarceration Conditions: Dr. Biscet is incarcerated in cell 1232, on the second floor of the south wing of building #1 of maximum security prison Combinado del Este in Havana. He has been subjected to the harshest prison conditions since March 2003. Family visits are allowed every 3 months for 2 hours and conjugal visits are allowed every 4 months for 3 hours. The prison cell where he is forced to live is unfit for long term confinement. No human being could escape illness if confined there for a prolonged period of time. The conditions are as follows: humidity, whitewashed walls, no mattress, no lighting, no ventilation nor a chair to sit on. In addition, there is: excessive noise, little privacy, restricted family contact, a hostile environment, as well as other factors that place his health and life at high risk.

Health Conditions: Total deterioration of his dental health. He suffers recurring bouts of localized infection with for which he has taken antibiotics and analgesics. Associated to the aforementioned, he has presented symptoms of high blood pressure, a condition which he has had for many years. He is controlling it with atenolol and clortalidona tablets which the family provides for him. He is progressively loosing his eyesight and has pain in his joints. More than 100 prisoners found in his prison subdivision consume the same food rations that are taken to his cell. Like my husband, the prisoners subsist thanks to the food brought to the penitentiary by their families since prison food is unsuitable for human consumption. Dr. Biscet is taken outside in the sunlight sporadically and is allowed to walk in the outdoors once a month.

Allegations by the Combinado del Este prison officials:

Officials Daniel and Yoelvis: Since the end of 2006 we have asked the prosecutors office to move Oscar to a prison which has incarceration conditions that are less harsh. We have not received a reply yet. Dr. Oscar Elías Biscet is imprisoned for peacefully defending the right to life and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In 1999, Amnesty International declared him prisoner of conscience. He is presently subjected to prison conditions that are inconsistent with the United Nation's international treaties against inhumane, cruel and degrading treatment of which Cuba is a signatory. Unfortunately, this situation goes unsolved by the Cuban government. His family, including myself, a health professional, are confronting an ethical, moral, and legal problem. That is why we are asking the immediate cooperation of dignitaries, medical doctors, non-governmental human rights organizations, and all those people who value life's and its dignity so that my husband is able to receive medical treatment, is removed from the harsh prison conditions he is being subjected to and is immediately and unconditionally released.

The family of Dr. Oscar E. Biscet has not received a response after the following allegations were made by prison officials Daniel and Yoelvis at the Combinado del Este Prison: "At the end of 2006, we asked the prosecutor's office to move Oscar to a less severe prison system."

Sincerely,
ELSA MOREJÓN, RN

February, 27, 2007

(Wife of Dr. Oscar Elías Biscet Gonzalez, president of the Lawton Foundation for Human Rights and prisoner of conscience.)

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