

URGENT ACTION

GRAFFITI ARTIST STILL IN MAXIMUM-SECURITY PRISON

Cuban graffiti artist Danilo Maldonado Machado ('El Sexto') continues to be detained in a maximum-security prison, a month and a half after his arrest. He is a prisoner of conscience who must be released immediately and unconditionally.

Danilo Maldonado Machado (also known as 'El Sexto') continues to be detained in El Combinado del Este, a maximum-security prison on the outskirts of Havana, the capital, and has now been detained for a month and half. Amnesty International has not had access to Cuban jails since 1988. According to news reports, El Combinado del Este is a high-security prison, where convicted murderers and political prisoners being punished for their political views are traditionally held.

Danilo Maldonado was arrested at his home in Havana the morning of 26 November 2016, hours after the announcement of Fidel Castro's death. That same day, Cuba-based newspaper *14 y medio* reported that he had graffitied the words "He's gone" (*Se fue*) on a wall in Havana.

According to his relatives who last visited him on 10 January 2017, Danilo Maldonado is suffering from frequent asthma attacks due to the damp in the prison. His family had difficulties getting an asthma preventer inhaler through security. When Danilo Maldonado sought medical attention he was given pills which made him feel worse and was forced to sign a document that he was not allowed to read, according to family. On 13 January, Danilo Maldonado called his relatives in a conversation that lasted around a minute, and said a rumour was going around in the prison that "they are going to shoot me" (*me van a fusilar*). His family say they do not know the source of the rumour, if Danilo Maldonado is having an emotional reaction to being detained, or if he has received a direct threat. According to his relatives, members of his family and friends have been questioned by the police since they filed for his immediate release on 29 December.

Danilo Maldonado's family understand he has been accused of damage to state property but have not seen official documents specifying these charges. His lawyer filed for his immediate release on 29 December.

Please write immediately in Spanish or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to release Danilo Maldonado Machado ('El Sexto') immediately and unconditionally, as he is a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression;
- Calling on them to guarantee the peaceful right to freedom of expression, assembly and association including for dissident, opponent or activist voices and to repeal all legislation which unduly limits these rights;
- Urging them to ensure that, pending his release, he is provided with any medical care which he may require, in particular if he refrains to eat; that he is not tortured or otherwise ill-treated; and that he is granted regular access to family and lawyers of his choosing.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 27 FEBRUARY 2017 TO:

President of the Republic

Raúl Castro Ruz

Presidente de la República de Cuba

La Habana, Cuba

Fax: +41 22 758 9431 (Cuba Office in

Geneva); +1 212 779 1697 (via Cuban

Mission to UN)

Email: cuba@un.int (c/o Cuban Mission

to UN)

Salutation: Your Excellency

Attorney General

Dr. Dario Delgado Cura

Fiscal General de la República

Fiscalía General de la República

Amistad 552, e/Monte y Estrella

Centro Habana, La Habana, Cuba

Salutation: Dear Attorney General/

Señor Fiscal General

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Teresita Vicente

Embassy of the Republic of Cuba

167 High Holborn WC1 6PA

020 7240 2488

Fax 020 7836 2602

secembajador@uk.embacuba.cu

www.cubadiplomacia.cu

Salutation: Her Excellency

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

This is the third update of UA 273/16. Further information:

www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr25/5301/2016/en/

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 20 October 2015, Danilo Maldonado Machado was released after spending almost 10 months in prison without trial following accusations of “aggravated contempt”. Amnesty International considered him a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression (see: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr25/2710/2015/en/>).

Danilo Maldonado Machado was accused of “aggravated contempt” after being arrested on 25 December 2014 for transporting two pigs with the names “Raúl” and “Fidel” painted on them, which he intended to release in an art show in Havana’s Central Park. He was never formally charged nor brought before a court during the almost 10 months he spent in detention.

Further information on UA: 273/16 Index: AMR 25/5509/2017 Issue Date: 16 January 2017