

URGENT ACTION

CUBA: JOSÉ DANIEL FERRER HELD INCOMMUNICADO FOR MONTHS

José Daniel Ferrer García, leader of the “Patriotic Union of Cuba”, was detained on July 11, 2021, in the context of widespread protests throughout the island. According to his family, he has been held in solitary confinement since August 14, 2021. Since March 17, 2023, he has remained incommunicado, and prior to this date, he was reported to have been in poor health. He is a prisoner of conscience and should be released immediately and unconditionally.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

*Miguel Díaz-Canel, President of Cuba
Hidalgo Esq. 6, Plaza de La Revolución, CP 10400, La Habana, Cuba
Email: despacho@presidencia.gob.cu*

Dear President,

I am writing to demand information regarding José Daniel Ferrer García, the leader of the Patriotic Union of Cuba, who, according to his family, has been held incommunicado for more than eighty-two days, without access to the outside world. The latest information received by his family in March 2023 indicated that he is suffering from serious health problems and is not receiving adequate medical attention.

The last time he was able to communicate with his family by phone was on March 6, and the last conjugal visit, according to his family, took place on March 14. Additionally, on March 17, José Daniel received a visit from the Archbishop of Santiago de Cuba. Since then, family visits, conjugal visits, and phone calls have been denied. Prior to that, his family had already informed Amnesty International that he has been held in a separate cell from other prisoners since August 14, 2021.

Detention without access to the outside world—being held incommunicado—facilitates torture and other ill-treatment and forced disappearances. In certain circumstances, it can itself constitute a form of torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment. Similarly, solitary confinement should only be used in exceptional circumstances, and if sustained for prolonged periods, it can also violate the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment.

On May 18, 2023, Amnesty International sent you an open letter informing you of this situation, José Daniel's deteriorating health, and demanding his immediate release. To date, no response to this letter has been received.

José Daniel Ferrer García, who was detained on July 11, 2021—before he could join the massive protests that took place across the island—is a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising his human rights.

I urge you to release José Daniel immediately and unconditionally and, pending his release, end his isolation and allow his family to communicate with him without delay.

Sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

José Daniel Ferrer García is an activist and the leader of the Patriotic Union of Cuba, an unofficial political opposition group. He was detained on July 11, 2021, in the context of the protests that took place across the island and has been in [prison](#) ever since.

On July 11, 2021, José Daniel was planning to attend the demonstrations, which, like the rest of the country, were being held in Santiago de Cuba. After leaving his house, José Daniel Ferrer García and his son were detained together, and from the beginning of his detention, the authorities repeatedly denied his family the opportunity to see him or communicate with him for long periods of time.

José Daniel Ferrer García was charged with "disturbance of public order"; however, he remains without being tried and in prison. In 2020, following another [trial tainted by irregularities](#), José Daniel was sentenced to four and a half years of house arrest. According to documents accessed by Amnesty International, considering the new charge of "disturbance of public order," the Provincial Court of Santiago revoked his house arrest sentence in August 2021 and ordered him to serve that sentence in jail.

On June 4, 2022, the Provincial Court of Santiago dismissed the habeas corpus petition filed by his family. On July 7, 2022, the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearances communicated to the NGO Prisoners Defenders that it had written to Cuba urging the state to provide detailed information to the Committee about its communication with the outside world.

In July 2022, Amnesty International [expressed](#) concern over reports indicating that José Daniel Ferrer García was being held incommunicado. In October 2022, [an Urgent Action](#) was launched, alerting to the risks of his prolonged solitary confinement and the incommunicado regime in which he was currently held. Authorities finally allowed him a visit on November 8, 2022.

José Daniel Ferrer García has long communicated that he suffers from health problems related to his prolonged previous incarcerations, including severe gastric problems and chronic headaches. The latest health information received by José Daniel's family in March 2023 confirms that he experienced ringing in the ears, skin problems, tooth pain, and progressive vision loss. José Daniel also experiences cramps and momentary paralysis in his hands. His family notes that he has not received adequate dental care or medication in Mar Verde prison in Santiago de Cuba, where he is being held.

YOU CAN WRITE APPEALS IN: Spanish or English

SEND APPEALS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, AND NO LATER THAN: August 1, 2023

PREFERRED NAME AND GRAMMATICAL GENDER: José Daniel Ferrer García (male)