

Our Five Heroes, Prisoners of the Empire



Who are the Cuban Five?

The Cuban Five are five Cuban men who are in U.S. prison, serving four life sentences and 75 years collectively, after being wrongly convicted in U.S. federal court in Miami, on June 8, 2001.

They are Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González.

The Five were falsely accused by the U.S. government of committing espionage conspiracy against the United States, and other related charges.

But the Five pointed out vigorously in their defense that they were involved in monitoring the actions of Miami-based terrorist groups, in order to prevent terrorist attacks on their country of Cuba.

The Five's actions were never directed at the U.S. government. They never harmed anyone nor ever possessed nor used any weapons while in the United States.

The Cuban Five's mission was to stop terrorism

For more than 40 years, anti-Cuba terrorist organizations based in Miami have engaged in countless terrorist activities against Cuba, and against anyone who advocates a normalization of relations between the U.S. and Cuba. More than 3,000 Cubans have died as a result of these terrorists' attacks.

Terrorist Miami groups like Comandos F4 and Brothers to the Rescue operate with complete impunity from within the United States to attack Cuba—with the knowledge and support of the FBI and CIA.

Therefore, Cuba made the careful and necessary decision to send the Five Cubans to Miami to monitor the terrorists. The Cuban Five infiltrated the terrorist organizations in Miami to inform Cuba of imminent attacks.

The aim of such a clandestine operation by the Cuban Five—at great personal risk—was to prevent criminal acts, and thus protect the lives of Cubans and other people.

But instead of arresting the terrorists, the FBI arrested the Cuban Five ANTI-terrorists on September 12, 1998. The Five were illegally held in solitary confinement for 17 months in Miami jail.

The trial began in November 2000. With the seven-month trial based in Miami, a virtual witchhunt atmosphere existed. Defense attorneys' motions for a change of venue were denied five times by the judge, although it was obvious that a fair trial was impossible in that city.

In a blow to justice, the Cuban Five were convicted June 8, 2001 and sentenced to four life terms and 75 years in December, 2001.

The Cuban Five were separated and sent to five prisons in different locations of the U.S, evidently to make it more difficult for their lawyers to assist them, and to keep the Five as separate persons - not as the monolithic symbol they have become.

A victory in appeals, then a surprise reversal

On August 9, 2005, after seven years of unjust imprisonment, the Cuban Five won an unprecedented victory on appeal. A three-judge panel of the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals overturned the convictions of the Cuban Five and ordered a new trial outside of Miami.

However, in an unexpected reversal on Oct. 31, the 11th Circuit Court vacated the three-judge panel's ruling and granted an "en banc" hearing before the full panel of 12 judges. Exactly one year after the victory that granted the Five a new trial, the panel voted 10 to 2 to deny the Five heroes a new trial, and instead affirmed the trial court.

Nine remaining issues of appeal are before the three-judge panel (it is actually two judges now, one has retired), and as of December 2006, final supplemental documents were submitted by defense and prosecution.

Your support is more important than ever

This case is a political case and the Cuban Five are political prisoners.

Their freedom will depend not only on the arduous work of the defense team but just as importantly on the public support that can be organized. Over 250 committees have been established in the United States and around the world, demanding immediate freedom for Gerardo, Ramón, Antonio, Fernando and René.

Important declarations have been made by hundreds of parliamentarians in Britain, Italy, and the European and Latin American Parliaments. The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detentions, with five judges, ruled that there were irregularities in the Five's trial and arrest, effectively denying them a fair trial and calls on the U.S. government to remedy this injustice.

The year 2007 will be critical for the struggle to win freedom for the Cuban Five. Contact the **Namibian Committee to Free the Five** and find out what you can do for these five men who dedicated their lives to save others.

Information Note

On the morning of August 3, Hero of the Republic of Cuba, Gerardo Hernandez, telephoned his wife, Adriana Pérez O'Connor and informed her that on the afternoon of August 2 had been moved from the punishment cell, where he had been since July 21 to the normal prison area where he is serving his unjust conviction.

The State Department on Monday afternoon, had informed the Cuban authorities of the transfer.

Adriana, in a conversation, found him in good spirits and high morale.

On behalf of the Cuban people, we are grateful for the outpouring of support and solidarity shown by various organizations and people of goodwill who demanded an end to this cruel and inhuman treatment. We will continue the struggle until justice is done and the Five return to their homeland.



Republic of Namibia

Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry

Media Release

Agriculture Investment Conference 2010

The Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, in conjunction with the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Namibia Manufacturers Association is to host the Agriculture Investment Conference 2010 from 15 to 17 September this year. The conference will feature over 300 delegates comprised of local, regional and international investors; financiers from commercial and development finance institutions; local, regional and international agribusiness services industries; business owners and startups and innovators; senior executives and managers of agro-related industries; government officials and decision-makers; government-link companies and agencies; management consultants and industry analysts; research and development (R&D) and academia; manufacturers and agro-technology suppliers and agro-marketing agencies.

Furthermore, it will also feature delegates from Regional Institutions such as the Southern Africa development Community (SADC) Secretariat; Southern African Customs Union (SACU) and Africa Union (AU) and other international organizations, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); United Nations Industrial development Organisation (UNIDO); Africa development Bank (ADB) and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA).

The conference is a follow up to the initial 2008 Value Addition Conference held in Okahandja by the mentioned partners and other stakeholders to identify possible areas of value addition in the agriculture and forestry sectors. It is also subsequent to and in line with the Abuja Declaration on development of Agribusiness and Agro-industries in Africa, which took place earlier this year in Abuja, Nigeria.

The Agriculture Investment Conference 2010 was necessitated by the fact that agriculture can make a greater impact on the country's economic development if there is a concerted effort to ensure that Namibia adds value to its primary agricultural commodities and exploit the opportunities for processed agro-food products in the domestic, regional and international markets. Added the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, Mr Andrew Ndishishi, *"but this can only occur if we are diligent and committed to exploring the entire value chain of agricultural production and in this regard the key themes identified to guide the proceedings of the conference are vital. Our agricultural output can only be maximized if we adequately understand that the sector can provide impetus to other sectors to, whilst adding value to the agricultural sector, can themselves grow in the process by rendering support services to the sector."*

The key themes identified are as follows:

Agribusiness – this relates to investment in agricultural infrastructure such as power and water supply for irrigation, land, access roads, buildings and the like.

Agro-technology – this would mean plant, implements, machinery and equipment for land preparations and innovations in the construction of infrastructure such as silos, milling facilities, dairies, cold storage and other facilities

Agro-inputs – These include the production of improved seeds, fertilizers to improve yields per hectares, chemicals and pesticides against plant diseases and pests as well as chemicals for food processing and conservation. These to a certain extent are all imported but could be successfully mixed, packaged or produced locally.

Agro-logistics and supply – opportunities within this include transportation, haulage, storage and warehousing and distribution agricultural produce, inputs, machineries and plants

Agro-finance – this relates to access to finance as well as the availability, affordability of agro-finance products across a wider spectrum than is currently offered. Currently much of the finance products are aimed at land acquisition and less to crop production or food processing.

In this regard, numerous projects have been identified, some of which will be showcased at the conference, which form part of this value-chain of agriculture, but which due to lack of financing have remained mere dreams of the initiators. The conference would therefore, further aim to bring together financiers and such projects with the view to match them and realizing the dreams of those entrepreneurs who will greatly add value to our endeavours.

Therefore the conference aims to present business opportunities in the agricultural sector and across the value chain. It would further aim to expose the opportunities as well as technologies and financial resources available to propel agriculture and agri-business development; provide an interactive platform for industry-players to network and exchange information; encourage more entrepreneurs to tap into the vast opportunities available in the agri-business sector and to provide an opportunity for participants to learn about emerging global trends and new innovations in agriculture and agro-based industries.

So, diarise the dates of 15 -17 September 2010 and come learn more about what the agricultural sector can mean to growing your business. It is the expectation of the Ministry that more work has to be done after the conference. There shall be follow mechanism to further support the implementation of the identified projects and exploration of the other available opportunities.

Prepared By:

Usi Ortwin //Hoebeb

Public Relations Officer

Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry

Private Bag 13184

WINDHOEK

NAMIBIA

Tel: + 264 61 208 7720

Fax: + 264 61 208 7767

Mobile: 081 122 6797