Resolution in the Humanitarian Matter of Oscar López Rivera

WHEREAS, Oscar López Rivera, at 72 years old, is the longest-held political prisoner in the history of Puerto Rico. He has served 33 years behind bars -- more time than South African President Nelson Mandela served;

WHEREAS, in 1981 as a member of the Puerto Rican Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN), he was arrested and convicted of seditious conspiracy to use force against the lawful authority of the U.S. over Puerto Rico, along with 14 other Puerto Rican men and women. Neither he nor any of his co-defendants were convicted of harming or killing anyone.

WHEREAS, he was kept in solitary confinement for 12 out of 33 years of imprisonment, constituting a gross human rights violation;

WHEREAS, he was born in San Sebastian, Puerto Rico in 1943 and is a decorated veteran of the Vietnam War;

WHEREAS, in 1999, as the result of an international campaign for their release, President Clinton commuted the sentences of most of these men and women. The President had offered to commute Oscar López Rivera's sentence after he served another 10 years in prison. In solidarity with those not included in the commutation, he declined;

WHEREAS, all those released are living productive, law-abiding lives. Oscar López Rivera is the only one of his co-defendants still behind bars;

WHEREAS, U.S. labor organizations representing millions of workers -- AFL-CIO, AFSCME, LCLAA, and the Puerto Rico AFL-CIO -- have passed resolutions calling on President Obama to grant his immediate and unconditional release;

WHEREAS, the UN Decolonization Committee has passed a resolution every year for the past 15 years urging his release during its annual hearings;

WHEREAS, student organizations in CUNY are actively advocating for Oscar López Rivera's release. In October, 2013, over 300 students at Hostos Community College "went to prison" for Oscar in a symbolic 6'x 9' cell as a demonstration of solidarity with López Rivera.

WHEREAS, in Puerto Rico, several former governors, including Rafael Hernández Colón, Sila María Calderón, Pedro Rosselló, Aníbal Acevedo Vilá, and the current governor Alejandro García Padilla, have all petitioned President Obama for the immediate release of Oscar López Rivera, as have Puerto Rico's Resident Commissioner to the U.S. Congress Pedro Pierluisi and the Mayor of San Juan, Carmen Yulín Cruz. The Puerto Rico Senate and House of Representatives have also passed resolutions in favor of Oscar López Rivera's release;

WHEREAS, NYC City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito has publicly supported the release of Oscar Lopez Rivera, including at the 2014 National Puerto Rican Day Parade, at which he was honored;¹

WHEREAS, a growing coalition of public figures and organizations is convening a

¹ http://www.capitalnewyork.com/article/city-hall/2014/06/8546665/mark-viverito-dedicates-puerto-rican-parade-jailed-nationalist

49	mobilization/rally on May 30, 2015 in New York City, from West Harlem through East Harlem
50	calling for the release of Oscar López Rivera; ²
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52	BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, the Professional Staff Congress:
53	• joins the AFL-CIO in calling on the President Obama to exercise his Constitutional
54	power to grant the immediate and unconditional release of Oscar López Rivera;
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56	• supports its members in joining with CUNY students to participate in the May 30, 2015
57	demonstration.
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59	Submitted by Hostos PSC chapter, April 2, 2015

 $^{^2\,}http://free oscarny cmay 30.org/?page_id=33$