

ÇAĞDAŞ GAZETECİLER DERNEĞİ

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**SUBMISSION FOR THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW OF CUBA
MAY 2013**

Progressive Journalists Association (PJA)



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1. As Progressive Journalists Association (PJA), we appreciate this opportunity to submit our views on human rights, especially on press freedom, in Cuba for Cuba's Universal Periodic Review in May 2013.
2. Despite all defamatory claims relating to human rights and press freedom in Cuba, PJA is strongly convinced that the Cuban state makes its best effort to fulfil requirements of both.
3. Since the Cuban Revolution, the Cuban state's efforts have yielded significant results such as free and high-quality education and health services to all citizens, full employment, distribution of land to peasants, housing to all, universal social security, cheap transportation services, etc.
4. The abovementioned are all basic human rights that are recognized by the Constitution of the Republic of Cuba.
5. The Constitution also guarantees the freedom of speech and press.
6. Cuba has a very rich environment of press. Besides national televisions, radios and newspapers, more than 90 municipalities have their own local newspapers and radio stations. In line with the socialist democratic principles of the Republic, journalists work in full freedom of expression.
7. Most of those defamatory claims relating to freedom of expression and press are based on the false presumption that private ownership of press institutions is a must for democracy. We are well aware of the fact that this is not the case; on the contrary, the world press is dominated by corporations that are only motivated by profit maximization.
8. The Cuban society is founded upon the idea of collective good of each and every citizen and it has organized its social institutions, including the press media, in a unique collective way that is apparently not appreciated by those corporations in pursue of profit maximization.
9. Those "journalists", such as Yoani Sanchez, who are subject to international "solidarity" campaigns, are only examples of a farce produced under the framework of the hostile policies targeting the egalitarian and sovereign policies of Cuba. The most prominent indicator of those hostile policies is the economic, commercial and financial blockage of the United States, which indisputably constitutes an act of genocide under Article II (c) of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and an act of economic warfare, violating the human rights of the Cuban population.



10. Any serious dealing with the human rights and press freedom in Cuba should base its considerations on real facts, such as the impacts of the blockade, rather than speculations and biased allegations produced by those who do not respect the free will of a sovereign nation. It is not fair to criticize Cuba for not providing sufficient access to Internet where the build-up of the Internet infrastructure is hindered by such a comprehensive blockade.
11. And, we believe, the UPR of Cuba as well should base its considerations on the how Cuba makes efforts to collaborate with international bodies to improve human rights in Cuba. Among these efforts are the following reports of this country on human rights: the Second Periodic Report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2011), the Combined Reports of the 14th to 18th to the Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination (2011) and the combined second, third and fourth reports to the Committee Against Torture (2012).