

## Public Statement „For a new EU-policy towards Cuba”

### To the COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

- President Dr. Angela Merkel, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany
- President of the Council, Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany
- To all members of the Council of the EU

As well as Mr. Javier Solana, higher representative for a common policy of security and foreign affairs.

In June 2007 the “**Common point of view of the European Union towards Cuba**” is about to be revised again.

With regard to the activities of the government of the United States against all international law and supported by individual member states of the European Union, it is to be feared that the present US-bond EU-policy will be continued throughout 2007 and onwards.

Neither the federal government nor the governmental boards of the EU have done anything to end the US-blockade against Cuba which has been condemned by the majority of the member states of the United Nations nor have they taken measures to stop the US-policy which infringes international law. To the contrary, this aggressive policy is being followed by responsible politicians of some of the EU-states aiming at a political and economical breakdown of the victim – the sovereign state of Cuba – by supporting the subversive measures of the US-government. For people with a democratic and humanistic way of thinking this is totally unacceptable.

The short-sighted policy of the Germany government and the EU towards Cuba needs to be changed now and this needs a new point of view. To give an example, the British Minister of Foreign Affairs mentioned on August 28, 2003 in the british daily The Guardian: *“Criticism (towards Cuba) should never ignore that Cubas most important contribution to the world is that of having proved that it is possible to combat poverty, diseases and analphabetism in a country that used to have more than enough of it. That is an enormous achievement. And the fact that it has been achieved under the continuous aggression of its obsessed neighbour country, makes it even more astonishing.”*

We believe that a further insistence on the “common point of view” which has been valid for the EU since 1996 will prove as geopolitically and geostrategically counterproductive: since the last elections to the congress in the United States a political change is visible which might also affect the relations between the Latin-American and Caribbean neighbours. A further point of view is the increasing cooperation between the Latin-American and Caribbean States, where Cuba’s has always been playing an important role in the construction of relationships within the region. The fact that especially Germany seems to adhere to the political course of President Bush, which means political and economical pressure will prove counter-productive for the European Union, as a policy which is build on hardening and pressure will tighten the own reputation and reduce or even enable the possibilities of cooperation for Germany – and all other EU-countries – in most of the Latin-American and Caribbean countries for a long time.

### **It is therefore time for the EU to develop and practice a new policy towards Cuba for the future:**

- The destructive “Common point of view of the European Union towards Cuba” of 1996 must be given up and a fair and just basis for the EU-policy towards Cuba must be created.
- Cuba must be able to find its own way to develop without the increasing illegal attempts of destabilization of the US-administration. They must be stopped. The EU-member states must put pressure on their transatlantic partner USA to adhere to the UN-resolutions which require an end of the blockade.
- The sanctions of the EU against Cuba must be stopped without any conditions. The EU should instead aim at open and sincere conversations with the Cuban government.
- The EU must accept that Cuba has a right for fair, social and ecological trade relationships
- Furthermore, some of the EU-member states have the obligations – due to their colonial past – to push within the European Union for economic, technical and scientific assistance in order to develop a sustainable economy. Cuba has achieved by its own power remarkable results (See: WWF/GfN-studies 2006 and 2005). That deserves our respect!

