

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

January 27, 2014

The Honorable Roberta S. Jacobson  
Assistant Secretary  
Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs  
U.S. Department of State  
Washington, DC 20521

Dear Assistant Secretary Jacobson:

We write to express our profound concern regarding migration and mail “talks” with the Cuban dictatorship under your bureau, and to request a meeting to address these concerns.

We were especially troubled by the apparent disconnect between the brutal realities of totalitarian Cuba and the seeming embrace of their primary oppressors such as Josefina Vidal. In fact, while the talks were ongoing, human rights activists, such as Juan Carlos Gonzalez Leyva, were imprisoned and others, such as Angel Yunier Remon Arzuaga (known as “El Critico”), and U.S. citizen Alan Gross continues to languish in a Cuban prison.

It is worth nothing that Secretaries John Kerry and Hillary Clinton have clearly stated that there would be no trade of the remaining “WASP” spies for Alan Gross because there is no equivalency between spies convicted in U.S. courts and innocent humanitarian aid worker Alan Gross being tried in a kangaroo court. However, when questioned about the Castro regime’s demand for a trade, the comment that the U.S. is “taking note” was a marked departure from U.S. policy where any talk of a trade was flatly and consistently rejected.

Finally, it appears from press reports that the scope of the actual talks exceeds the stated agenda items. As such, we would appreciate some clarification on the purpose of the talks and their parameters.

We support U.S. law and policy which place supreme importance on U.S. national security interests, human rights, and basic freedoms for the Cuban people. We are concerned that the direction of these “talks” have diverged from furthering those fundamental goals and undermine efforts to support the Cuban people by emboldening their oppressors. We urge you to maintain focus on U.S. interests and the Cuban people’s struggle for freedom during these “talks,” and respectfully request a meeting to discuss these concerns.

Sincerely,

  
ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN  
Member of Congress

  
MARIO DIAZ-BALART  
Member of Congress

  
ALBIO SIRES  
Member of Congress