



RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

April 30, 2018

The Honorable Michael Pompeo
United States Secretary of State
2201 C Street, Northwest
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

Congratulations on your confirmation to serve as our nation's Secretary of State. The President could not have made a better selection to lead the diplomatic and foreign affairs of the United States.

As you work to set forth the agenda to address the multiple challenges in advancing our foreign policy and national security, I would urge you to closely examine Latin America. Specifically, how the instability, chaos and violence in countries like Venezuela, and more recently Nicaragua, stem from the dominant role the Cuban dictatorship continues to exert in the region.

We are quickly approaching on the one-year anniversary of when the Administration laid-out a new Cuba policy. The course correction was important in letting the international community and the people of Cuba know that the United States would not engage with the dictatorship but would in fact engage and support those who are bravely seeking human rights, freedom and democracy.

Unfortunately, the vision announced by the President on June 16th, 2017 has fallen short in its execution. It is my sincere hope that you take immediate measures to assemble a team that will vigorously and effectively carry out the President's policy.

For starters, it should be made clear that the United States understands that until Cuba is on a path toward democracy, Venezuela will remain on a path toward totalitarianism. As you well know the Cuban regime continues to direct the steps of the Maduro government and carries out many of the acts of repression against the Venezuelan people.

The cornerstone of the President's policy announcement last year was to prohibit U.S. financial transactions with businesses entities of the Cuban military. However, that scope of those entities was very narrowly defined by the State Department, allowing for numerous loopholes that has permitted the dictatorship to easily circumvent the prohibitions.

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The Cuban dictatorship apparatus must understand that there are consequences for their continued repression of the Cuban people. Toward that end, all visas to Cuban nationals who are linked to acts of repression should be denied. Pro-democracy leaders and human rights activists should be allowed to denounce and provide information on the identity of any individual that carries out these acts.

I would also suggest that until the Cuban government ceases the ongoing repression on the Ladies in White and the other pro-democracy and human rights activists on the island, the U.S. should not grant any visas to any individual affiliated with the dictatorship. For example, on May 20th, 2018 the Cuban government is sending a delegation of 200 artists, many who are known representatives of the dictatorship, to an event in Washington, D.C. titled "Artes de Cuba". The issuance of U.S. visas to these agents of the dictatorship is inconsistent with current U.S. policy and demoralizing to the brave men and women of the pro-democracy movement.

This topic is incredibly important to me and I welcome the opportunity to discuss these concerns in greater detail with you.

In closing, it's my sincere hope that you will put in place a vigorous timetable to implement the President's Cuba directive and pro-actively work toward a path that aides the Cuban people regain their long-awaited sovereignty. I have no doubt that a free Cuba will yield greater stability and more freedom and opportunity for the Western Hemisphere.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and attention.

Sincerely,



Rick Scott
Governor