

# *Joint Statement of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in USA and the Council of Churches of Cuba*

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La Habana, Cuba – Washington, DC, USA

March 26, 2020

On either side of the river is the tree of life  
with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month;  
and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Revelation 22:2 NRSV

We are only days away from Easter 2020, the most important celebration of Christianity, and the world is going through a crisis of inestimable implications that affects all edges of life on the planet.

The Council of Churches of Cuba and the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA have worked closely together for many years for the right to life, health, and welfare of all the inhabitants of this world. It is the love of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, that unites us and demands that we raise our prayer to our God for the countries and the families that suffer today because of the COVID-19 pandemic. This suffering intensifies and worsens due to inequalities and injustices; the enormous gaps between the rich and the poor; differences among regions; lack of inclusion; gender injustice and migratory and climate justice problems.

We solicit the government of the United States for the immediate lifting of the economic, financial and commercial blockade imposed on Cuba for over 60 years as well as that imposed on other nations.

We request the cessation of all manipulation and use of political and economic interests in the face of the current global health crisis, worsened and visualized by the COVID 19 pandemic.

We request the international ecumenical movement; all churches and faiths in the United States and in the world; governments; the United Nations and all people of goodwill to come together in a global effort to petition for the immediate lifting of the blockade and the cessation of all sanctions on any country or region. Especially now, these genocidal policies hold back and limit the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We salute and congratulate the Pastoral Letter of the World Council of Churches on March 18; the Joint Statement of the ACT Alliance and Religions for Peace on March 26; especially the Call of Church World Service on March 24 in relation to the blockade and the sanctions. Other initiatives and efforts are coming into being as a global campaign in favor of collaboration, unity, and peace in the search for appropriate responses and solutions to the COVID-19 pandemic and world crisis.

We are grateful for the thousands of Cuban doctors, nurses, and healthcare professionals who are selflessly providing lifesaving assistance throughout the world. Therefore, it is imperative the blockade and coercive sanctions are lifted so they would be able to save lives during the pandemic.

We know that goodwill between Cubans and Americans will help the entire world in this moment. We pray our call will be heard.

Jim Winkler

General Secretary and President

National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA

Rev. Antonio Santana Hernandez

President

Council of Churches in Cuba

Rev. Joel Ortega Dopico

Executive Secretary

Council of Churches in Cuba

Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer

Governing Board Chair

National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA

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