

London Denies Entry Visa to Cuban Anti-terrorist Fighter Rene Gonzalez



Havana, March 5 (RHC)-- The United Kingdom denied an entry visa to Cuban anti-terrorist fighter Rene Gonzalez, who was invited to participate at the International Investigation Commission on the case of the Cuban Five, to take place March 7 and 8 in London.

On March 3rd, and few hours before Gonzalez was scheduled to take a flight to London, the British government rejected his visa application, according to a press release issued by the Prensa Latina news agency.

The information, released by the International Committee for the Freedom of the Five, reads that Gonzalez is the main witness to testify at the event to take place at the prestigious Law Society in London.

The British Immigration and Visa Office denied the visa based the UK's Immigration Law which, according to Item 320, any person who has served an over-four-year prison sentence is not allowed to enter the United Kingdom. Although such a permit can be exceptionally granted, the British government says that Gonzalez's participation at the International Commission is not a strong reason to justify an entry visa.

The director of the Solidarity-with-Cuba Campaign in the UK, Rob Miller, who is one of the organizers of the Investigation Commission, said that they are very disappointed at the decision of the British government and he noted that the visa denial can only be taken as a political decision, since the Cuban Five case has been largely politicized.

At least 20 witnesses and lawyers, including the U.S. legal team, relatives of the Cuban Five, victims of terrorist actions against Cuba and international law experts are already traveling to London to participate in the event.

Rene Gonzalez was the first of the five Cuban to return to the island after serving an unfair 13-year prison sentence in the United States. He was followed by Fernando Gonzalez, who was released last week after serving 15 years. Meanwhile, Gerardo Hernandez, Ramon Labanino and Antonio Guerrero are still held in U.S. prisons serving unfair and extremely long sentences. The Five were arrested and jailed in 1998 after they monitored Florida-based violent organizations that planned terrorist actions against the Cuban people.

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