

SENATOR RUBIO MOURNS THE LOSS OF CUBAN DISSIDENT OSWALDO PAYÁ

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) issued the following statement regarding the tragic loss of Cuban dissident Oswaldo Payá, who died in a car crash on Sunday:

“Oswaldo Payá’s death is a tragedy and huge loss for his family and all Cuban people, especially those who struggle in and outside of Cuba to see an end to the repressive Castro regime. My condolences go out to the Payá family, and my prayers are with them during this difficult time. I also join in solidarity with all those courageous Cubans who continue the fight for freedom that Payá was an instrumental part of for so many years.

“Payá is one of many heroes on the island who has exposed the myths and failures of the Cuban Revolution and challenged its habitual violation of human rights. As we try to learn more about the circumstances of Payá’s death, it is critically important that the international community join those inside Cuba in pressuring the regime to be forthcoming with the truth. Given this regime’s gross human rights record, its callous treatment of political dissidents and over 50 years worth of blood on its hands, we should insist that they be transparent in answering all the questions about Payá’s death. It’s important that anyone with knowledge about this car crash be protected and allowed to share what they know.”

Oswaldo Payá challenged the legitimacy of the Cuban government by creating the Varela Project. The project took advantage of a loophole in the Revolution’s Constitution by collecting petitions calling for democratic liberalization of Cuban society. The Castro regime’s brutal response of canceling the petition and arresting the leading signatories of the project proved once again that the Castro Communist dictatorship’s sole purpose in its dying moments is to remain in power at all costs. The regime’s response led to the “Black Spring”, whereby 75 independent journalists and activists were unjustly imprisoned. Payá was also a founding member of the Christian Liberation Movement that was created to denounce human rights violations in Cuba.

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