

Letter to the Pope Francisco: our freedom is also in your protection

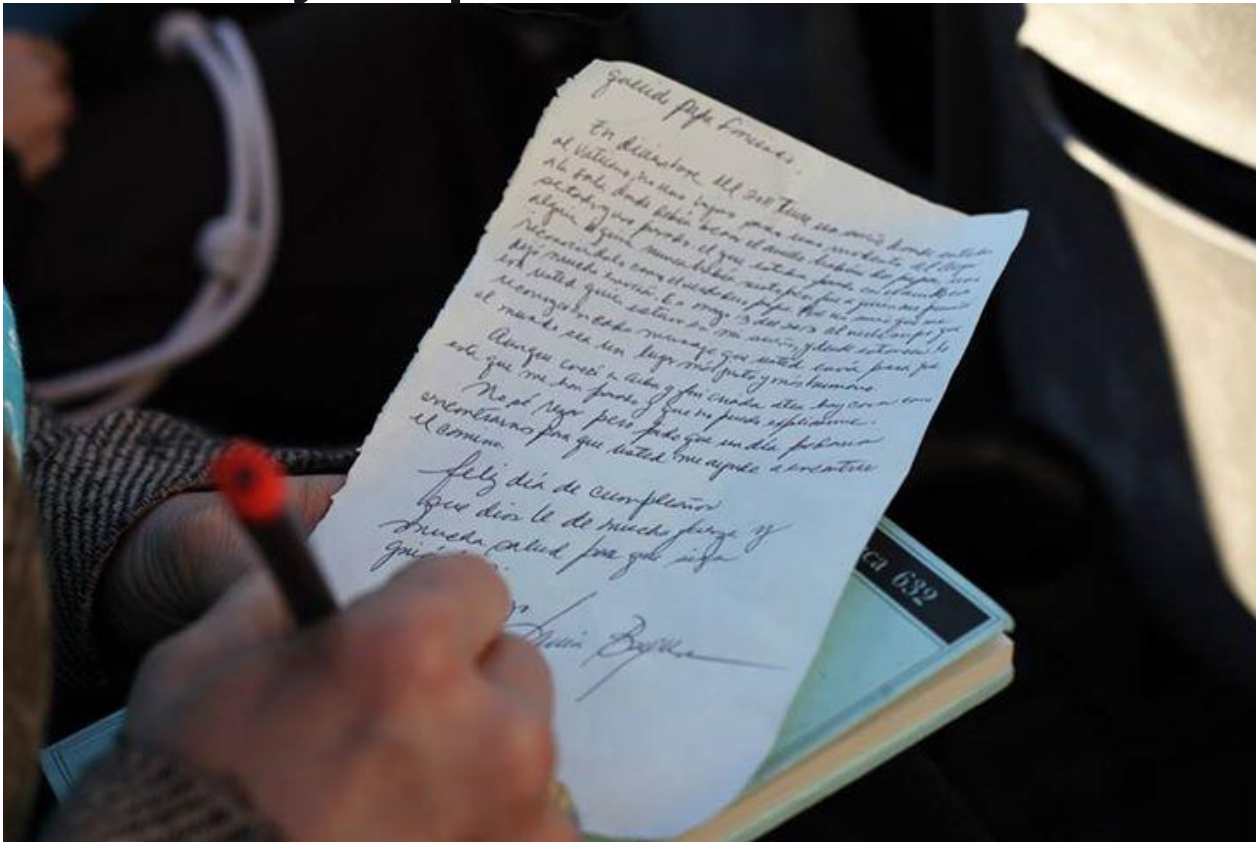


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LETTER TO THE POPE FRANCISCO Our freedom is also in your protection

Frankfurt, December 26, 2014

His Holiness, Pope Francis
Vatican City, 00120

His Holiness Dear Pope Francis,

My name is Tania Bruguera, I am a Cuban who was raised as an atheist and a communist, but to whom life has taught that everything has nuances and that we learn from everyone. I think that inner peace is only found when one sees oneself in the other.

I am writing to you as a Cuban, as an artist and as a citizen, to let you know that I will be arriving at Jose Marti International Airport in Havana-Cuba today, December 26, 2014 at 20:05 pm local time on the Condor Flight of 5184, and humbly ask you for your blessing and protection on my trip and stay in Cuba, and protection and blessings to those who will attend as well as participate in my performance at La Plaza de la Revolución in La Habana, Cuba, on December 30th at 3 pm. This is going to be an artistic event that will allow us to speak and peacefully talk about what concerns us right now.

On December 17th, 2014, I was in Rome listening to your sermon, hours after US and Cuba presidents Barack Obama and Raul Castro announced the resumption of diplomatic relations between the two countries, while thanking His Holiness for his mediation. My first reaction was to write an Open Letter (<http://www.taniabruguera.com/cms/711-1-Blog+2014+overview.htm>) addressed to His Holiness, Barack Obama and Raul Castro thanking them for the historic moment and then after that I headed straight to Raúl, asking him questions and expressing my doubts, just as any other Cuban citizen who wants to understand would do.

Following the publication of my Open Letter, a group of politically unaffiliated Cubans, located in different parts of the world, reacted to a line contained in the document, it invited "all Cubans to meet on December 30th at La Plaza of the Revolution to speak at an 'open mic'". This group created the #YoTambienExijo (<http://www.facebook.com/YoTambienExijo>) platform, with three thousand people joining in, in just six days. Many Cubans inside and outside the island nation, and with different ways of thinking and different faiths, all wanting to participate in the future of Cuba.

#YoTambienExijo platform has proposed a re-do of the performance I did at the Havana Bienal in 2009, mentioned in the Open Letter. This time the performance will not enjoy the protection afforded by being part of an international art event, and as a response to the historical moment this is to us Cubans. The #yotambienexijo platform is proposing that the event on the 30th is held as a civil and peaceful event where discrimination, insults to the integrity of persons, calls for violence, illegal acts or violent actions against public order will not be tolerated or accepted.

The performance will be held at a public space, with ordinary Cubans as protagonists, under the concept of Useful Arts. Performances and initiatives such as this one we are holding at our public square, better known as La Plaza are common occurrences in other countries. Social and artistic movements have always been linked, one of the strongest examples of this symbiotic relationship in Latin America was that of the movement Tucumán Arde. These processes extend political borders and Cuba is part of the world, so we see as a very positive development for the Cuban society to insert ourselves into the global art movements and human rights to promote and rescue the faith for a better world.

His Holiness, I had already planned to go to Havana to spend with my family, who are elderly and sick people the New Year's holiday. My travel documents are all in order, I am not carrying documents deemed as subversive and/or illegal. The only thing I carry is the honesty of my words, my passion for Cuba where all Cubans are equal, and a desire to see in Cuba a society without political, social, economic, religious, cultural injustices and where money is not the answer to all the concerns of the soul.

His Holiness Pope Francis, our freedom is also in your protection. Please, do not leave us alone. I'll be at La Plaza because I have no fear. I hope that you will spiritually accompany all of us that will be on December 30th 2014 at 15:00 at our public square in Cuba.

His Holiness, bless us Cubans, at a time when Pope John Paul II words are very relevant, when in 1998 in that same plaza he told Cubans not to be afraid, to open ourselves to the world so that the world could then open to us.

His Holiness, Pope Francis, congratulations on your birthday and May God grant you much strength to continue fulfilling your mission. Our humble prayers are always with you.

Tania Bruguera
Platform spokesman #YoTambienExijo