

The former Heads of State and Heads of Government, signatories of this statement, endorsed by the Iniciativa Democrática de España y las Américas, hereby acknowledge:

1. There is a contradiction between the Vienna Declaration, adopted by the Cuban State in 1993, which states that “*Democracy is based on the will of the people, freely expressed, to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural regime, and in their full participation in all aspects of life*” and the declaration of Cuba’s economic, political and social system as “*irrevocable,*” as stated in the Cuban Constitution as of 2002;
2. The desire for democratic change to a pluralistic system, as expressed by the more than thirty-five thousand Cubans who signed the Varela Project, consistent with their constitutional rights;
3. The absence in Cuba of the minimum conditions necessary for holding free, fair and competitive elections. Among these conditions is included the respect for fundamental rights such as freedom of expression and association, basic elements in any democratic society.

Cubans continue to be deprived of their voice and democratic channels. Therefore we claim the right of Cubans to live in democracy and we support the proposal of the citizens' initiative Cuba Decide to carry out a **Binding Plebiscite** which will allow the people to express themselves and to sovereignly decide on the change to a democratic system with free, fair and pluralistic elections; with freedom of expression, freedom of the press and freedom of association in political parties and social organizations that respect the plurality of Cuban society.

For the results of the **Binding Plebiscite** to be legitimate the following conditions must be guaranteed:

- The independence and impartiality of the electoral body responsible for organizing the process so that all the votes are counted in an accurate, fair, equitable and transparent way;
- The presence of national and international observers during all stages;
- Freedom to carry out an electoral campaign with the full use of freedom of expression and association, as well as with equal access to the census, the electorate and the mass media, including those that are state-owned or controlled by the State.

Through this means we offer our willingness to accompany Cuba in its sovereign path to the rule of law, democracy and freedom, and we invite the international community, all governments and the multilateral institutions to join this initiative.

Proclaimed and signed on 12 May 2016.