

## **Ana Belén Montes, an update April 2016**

From Miriam, Ana Belén's first cousin.

A lot of information about Ana can be obtained on the Internet. Declarations she made before the Federal Court in 2002 are beautiful and they express Ana's feeling with respect to her collaboration directed toward protecting the Cuban people. Some of the information that has circulated shows a lack of precision. (It's impossible to guarantee that everything that is published is verifiable and correct.) But the following is what is important:

1. Ana Belén is a prisoner of conscience. Her parents were Puerto Rican. She was brought up in the United States.

2. Ever since she was young she's been interested in political processes in Latin America; she is empathetic, solidarity-minded, and with a stubborn sense of justice.

3. That's why, while she was working for the Defense Intelligence Agency in the Pentagon as an analyst specializing in Cuba, she shared confidential information with the island that allowed the Cuban people to protect themselves from aggressive attacks organized and paid for by the U.S. government.

4. She did not receive any remuneration for the work she did. She believed (and believes) firmly in the right of self-determination that is afforded every country, and through her actions she declared herself to be against the use of violence to bring down the Cuban government, which she understood to be legitimate.

5. She was arrested in September 2001 and a year afterwards was sentenced to 25 years for the crime of conspiracy to commit espionage for which she pled guilty.

6. At this point she has completed 14 years under conditions of isolation at the Medical Center of the Carswell high- security Federal Prison located at Ft. Worth, Texas.

7. Her case has generated particular interest ever since President Obama announced the beginning of a process of normalizing diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba and now that his words match with statements Ana Belén made before the Federal Court the day she was sentenced. She said then: "My greatest desire is to see amicable relations

emerge between the United States and Cuba ... Such a policy would bring our government back in harmony with the compassion and generosity of the American people.”

8. Those of us who are in solidarity with her are calling for her prison conditions to be improved and for Ana Belén finally to be released. We understand that her sentence is an anachronistic product of the Cold War, that she’s no threat to the security of society, and that her actions were motivated by humanistic principles and protected under ideas of freedom and dignity that all peoples of the world are worthy of. We know that Ana has been a pacifist by conviction, that she was looking to protect the Cuban people, and that at no time were her actions directed at causing danger to the U.S. nation. We believe History is agreeing with her. Just as other heroes and heroines have sacrificed their lives for a superior universal law, for a nobler and more just principle, Ana did likewise. For that reason she deserves that the world recognize her humanitarian and heroic feat.

I hope I have been able to communicate some information that may help you to better understand what Ana did.

Thank you for your interest, I am very grateful to people like yourself

Good day, Miriam Montes-Mock