

**Puerto Rican Independence Fighter
Oscar López Rivera to be Freed, as well
as
Courageous Whistleblower Chelsea
Manning**



Gerardo Hdez Nordelo @GerardoCuban5 · 12/25/16
Con Fernando González y #AndyMontañez en La #Havana #Cuba
pidiendo #LibertadparaOscarLópezRivera y respeto a sus
#DerechosHumanos #Oscar

The U.S. government announced today that Oscar López Rivera, who has been imprisoned in the U.S. for 36 years for his struggle to free Puerto Rico from U.S. colonial rule, will be released from prison on May 17. Courageous whistleblower Chelsea Manning, whose leaks of

videos and government documents revealed U.S. war crimes, will also be freed at the same time, with her 35-year sentence reduced to 7 years.

As reported by [TelesurTV](#), "López, born in Puerto Rico in 1943, is an independence leader in his native country. Upon returning to Chicago after serving in the Vietnam War, he joined the struggle for the rights of the Puerto Rican people and participated in acts of civil disobedience and other actions.

"In 1976, he joined the clandestine fight for the independence of Puerto Rico as a member of the Armed Forces of National Liberation. In 1981, he was captured by the FBI accused of "conspiracy" and for his militancy in the FALN.

"At the time of his capture, he proclaimed himself a prisoner of war, protected in the first protocol of the Geneva Convention of 1949. The protocol protects López for being a person arrested in conflict against colonial occupation. The U.S. did not recognize the demand of López and sentenced him to 55 years in prison, after an alleged attempt to escape, the sentence increased to 70 years in prison, 12 of which have been spent in isolated confinement."



The Cuban Five were among the many people around the world active in the struggle to free Oscar. Just as with Obama's decision to improve relations with Cuba, pressure from around the world and particularly from Latin America was essential in winning this victory.

Gerardo Hernández said today: "Hoy podemos celebrar. El ejemplo de ese patriota puertorriqueño nos sirvió de inspiración a los Cinco. Sabíamos que su pena era larga y que había estado preso mucho más tiempo que nosotros. Si Oscar no flaqueó, nosotros tampoco podíamos hacerlo. Nos alegramos por él y sus familiares". ["Today we can celebrate. The example of this Puerto Rican patriot was an inspiration to the Five. We knew that his grief was long, and that he had been imprisoned much longer than us. If Oscar did not falter, we could not do so either. We rejoice for him and his family."]

The struggle continues for other political prisoners, including Ana Belén Montes, Leonard Peltier, Mumia Abu Jamal, and so many more. Others, like Assata Shakur and Edward Snowden, would undoubtedly become political prisoners if the U.S. were to get its hands on them. The Cuba and Venezuela Solidarity Committee welcomes the decision to free Oscar López Rivera and Chelsea Manning, and looks forward to a day when all political prisoners (and potential political prisoners) are free.

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Formerly the National Committee to Free the Cuban Five (U.S.)

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