

The moral bankruptcy of the European Union in its policies towards Cuba

By [Salim Lamrani](#)

Global Research, May 14, 2007

14 May 2007

Region: [Europe](#), [Latin America & Caribbean](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#)

The European Union as a political entity is on its deathbed. Its role on the international scene is considerably diminished by its inability to form a foreign policy independent of the lines set down by Washington. It obediently follows the bellicose directives of the Bush administration, especially toward Cuba. Indeed, it lets itself be used in campaigns against the Havana government with a puzzling servility. Even worse, it makes itself an accomplice to the massive human rights violations committed by the CIA, a complicity that leads it into an unprecedented moral bankruptcy.

The hypocrisy of Sweden

On March 12, 2007, during the meeting of the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva, Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt accused Cuba of not respecting human rights. This charge is purely ideological since according to Amnesty International's 2006 report, Cuba is by far the nation that least violates human rights in the Americas, from Canada to Argentina [1]. It also shows the hypocrisy of Sweden and of Europe in general, always eager to challenge the small Caribbean nation, which has been under attack by the United States for almost half a century, while at the same time keeping a shameful silence about the crimes that the White House commits around the world [2].

On his part, the Cuban delegate, Rodolfo Reyes Rodriguez, regretted that Sweden had lent itself to the U.S. propaganda strategy, the objective of which is none other than to justify the cruel economic sanctions victimizing the Cuban people since 1960. He also pointed out the lack of moral authority of the Scandinavian government to give lectures on human rights [3].

Indeed, in May 2005, the UN Committee Against Torture condemned Sweden for deporting a young Bangladeshi political refugee who had been raped by police. According to the committee, the Swedish authorities did not deny the fact that she had been persecuted, jailed, tortured and raped, but went ahead with her removal anyway [4].

In November 2005, the European Human Rights Court unanimously confirmed that the removal of four Syrians seemed to be "a violation of their right to life and of the prohibition of all inhuman or degrading treatment." Sweden also carried out other deportations to countries that practiced torture and all were condemned by the Committee Against Torture. The rights of the refugees and asylum seekers were frequently violated, above all in the case of Gypsies, whose petitions were considered by the authorities to be "manifestly lacking grounds" [5].

In response, Stockholm denounced the "unacceptable" statements of the Cuban

representative before the commission in Geneva and evoked the possibility of a diplomatic crisis between the two countries. It is clear that certain truths are not pleasing to everyone [6].

The provocation of the Italian parliamentarians

On March 18, 2007, a group of five Italian members of parliament in search of sensationalism orchestrated a provocation in the streets of Havana, parading with political signs that demanded “freedom” for “prisoners of conscience.” The objective of European Parliament member Marco Capatto, Italian Senator Maurizio Turco, members Mateo Meccato and Elisabetta Zamparutti and ex-parliamentarian Maria Fida Mora, all of the Radical Party, was to provoke an incident with the Cuban authorities and in that way unleash a media campaign against Cuba. But the provocation was so clumsy that the Cuban government completely ignored them and they wandered through the streets of the capital without anyone molesting them [7].

“To our surprise, nothing happened as we were marching through the streets. We were there for around half an hour and everything was calm. The fact they did not arrest us is something that I will let you figure out,” said Marco Capatto, in this way letting slip his objective. Frustrated, they were forced to leave the island without even the satisfaction of being expelled [8].

Two days later, on March 20, the members made a visit to Miami. This visit was not to protest the fact that the city harbors and protects confessed terrorists such as Orlando Bosch or Jose Basulto. Nor was it to denounce the fact that Miami organizes public activities in favor of the release of the Bin Laden of Latin America, Luis Posada Carriles, guilty of killing more than 100 innocent civilians. No, their trip had no other purpose than to meet with the extremist group, Mothers against Repression, and hold a press conference with them. It turns out that this tiny front group, which receives significant grants from Washington, totally financed the M.P.s’ trip from Rome to Miami, passing through Havana and Panama, which explains the stopover in Florida [9].

The Italian parliamentarians were certain that they ran no risk in Cuba and that is what explains their activism. Would they have the courage to support dissidents in Colombia, Guatemala or Honduras? Would they be brave enough to protest in the streets of Washington, denouncing the crimes against humanity that are daily committed in Iraq, Afghanistan and Guantanamo? Would they be brave enough to protest in front of the Italian military security secret service (SISMI), which “played an active role in the kidnapping of Imam Abou Omar in Milan in 2003” with the complicity of Silvio Berlusconi’s government, according to the EU report on the disappearances orchestrated by the CIA? Cowardice and duplicity are decidedly in fashion [10].

The complicity of the European Union in the secret CIA flights and disappearances

On Feb. 14, 2007, the European Parliament published a report that accuses the governments of the Old World of flagrant complicity in the cases of forced disappearances and secret kidnappings orchestrated by the CIA. With monumental fraud, only one week prior these same governments had signed the UN Convention Against Forced Disappearances, which criminalizes the use of secret prisons. The European Union is expert in this kind of moral suicide [11].

According to the report, the CIA airplanes, which illegally carried people suspected of links to terrorism to torture centers in Guantanamo, Africa and Europe, made at least 1,245 stopovers in European airports. No government was unaware of the criminal character of these secret flights. Some countries—including EU members Poland and Romania—have even opened torture centers in their territories on behalf of U.S. executioners. Others such as Britain, Austria, Germany, Poland, Portugal, Denmark, Spain and—irony of the fates!—Italy and Sweden—participated in the kidnapping of suspects in their territories [12].

The Parliament condemned “the acceptance and cover-up of this practice, on several occasions, by the secret services and governmental authorities of some European countries.” In the majority of the cases, those kidnappings were accompanied by “secret detention and by the use of torture during interrogations.” According to the former British ambassador to Uzbekistan, Craig Murray, the exchanging of information obtained under torture by the services of third countries “was a practice known and tolerated by the British government” [13].

These serious violations of human rights go on with the full knowledge of the highest leaders of the European Union such as Javier Solana, secretary general of the EU Council, and Gijs de Vries, coordinator of the anti-terrorist struggle, who turned out to be “incapable of giving satisfactory answers” about their role in those removals. Nobody can try to ignore this terrible reality. Thus, as long as the European Union shows its double standard and depravity by attacking a small Third World nation, while at the same time hiding its own crimes, it will continue to languish in the purgatory of discredit on the international scene and in the eyes of the world.

Salim Lamrani is a French writer, profesor, and researcher and specializes in U.S.-Cuba relations. He is a regular contributor to Rebellion and Znet. The Spanish language translation is his own and has been edited by Caty R., of the Rebellion, Tlaxcala and Cubadebate collectives. This translation may be freely reproduced on the condition that it is not altered and the author, reviewer and source publication are cited.

[“La faillite morale de l’Union Européenne”](#), March 27th, translated by : Dana Lubow

Notes

[1] Salim Lamrani, Cuba, l’Union européenne et les droits de l’homme (Pantin: Le Temps des Cerises, 2007).

[2] Agence France Presse, «Tensos los vínculos entre Cuba y Suecia», March 22, 2007.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Amnesty International, «Rapport annuel 2006: Suède», April 2006.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Agence France Presse, «Tensos los vínculos entre Cuba y Suecia», op. cit.

[7] Javier Galeano, «Diputados italianos se suman a protesta de las Damas de Blanco», March 19, 2007.

[8] Rui Ferreira, «En Miami diputados italianos que protestaron en Cuba», El Nuevo Herald, March 20, 2007.

[9] Ibid.; El Duende, «Por donde le entra el agua al coco a los italianos», La Radio Miami, March 21, 2007.

[10] Parlamento Europeo, «Activités de la CIA en Europe: le Parlement adopte son rapport final et presse el Conseil d'obtenir davantage d'informations des Etats membres», February 14, 2007. www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/019-3030-043-02-07-902-20070209IPR02947-12-02-2007-2007-true/default_fr.htm (sitio consultado el 26 de marzo de 2007); Ignacio Ramonet, «CIA, vols secrets», Le Monde Diplomatique, marzo de 2007, p. 1.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid.

The original source of this article is Global Research
Copyright © [Salim Lamrani](#), Global Research, 2007

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Salim Lamrani](#)

About the author:

Docteur ès Etudes Ibériques et Latino-américaines de l'Université Paris IV-Sorbonne, Salim Lamrani est Maître de conférences à l'Université de La Réunion, et journaliste, spécialiste des relations entre Cuba et les Etats-Unis. Son nouvel ouvrage s'intitule Fidel Castro, héros des déshérités, Paris, Editions Estrella, 2016. Préface d'Ignacio Ramonet. Contact : lamranisalim@yahoo.fr ; Salim.Lamrani@univ-reunion.fr Page Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/SalimLamraniOfficiel>

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants

permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca