

**PUERTO RICO SUBCOMMITTEE  
PROPOSED RESOLUTION**

**2014 NLG CONVENTION**

WHEREAS, for the past 116 years, the United States has denied Puerto Rico its self-determination and independence, holding it as a colonial possession;

WHEREAS, in 1960, the United Nations General Assembly declared that the subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation constitutes a denial of fundamental human rights, is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and is an impediment to the promotion of world peace and co-operation; and further, that all peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development. Resolution 1514 (XV), Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;

WHEREAS, we are in the midst of the Third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (General Assembly Resolution 65/119);

WHEREAS, for the past 33 years, the United Nations Decolonization Committee has passed resolutions affirming the application of Resolution 1514 (XV) to the colonial case of Puerto Rico;

WHEREAS, in its most recent resolution of June 2014, the Decolonization Committee once again exhorted the U.S. to accelerate a process permitting the Puerto Rican people to exercise its inalienable right to self-determination and independence; once again urged the U.S. to clean up its toxic military waste from Vieques and Culebra and return the land to the people; and yet again called on the U.S. to release Puerto Rican political prisoner Oscar López Rivera, in prison for 33 years, recognizing his case as a humanitarian concern, and to release Puerto Rican political prisoner Norberto González Claudio;

WHEREAS, this past year has seen a surge in international indignation and calls for the release of 71 year old Oscar López Rivera, including diplomats and dignitaries, elected officials, teachers, students, lawyers, artists, actors and others;

WHEREAS, marches, rallies, demonstrations and symbolic events have taken place internationally to demand the release of Oscar López Rivera, including a mass march in San Juan in which 50,000 participated; a 333 mile walk through 33 towns in 33 days culminating on the 33<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of his arrest; monthly rallies held by 33 women in Puerto Rico and New York for 33 minutes; resolutions by the Senate of Puerto Rico; recognition by the New York Puerto Rican Day Parade; newspaper editorials supporting his release, calling his ongoing imprisonment “an affront to democracy that fails to respect human rights,” and more;

WHEREAS, the United States consistently ignores the resolutions of this august international body;

WHEREAS, the National Lawyers Guild has a long history of solidarity with the movement for the independence of Puerto Rico, and during its 2013 convention in San Juan, Puerto Rico, adopted a Proclamation in support of self-determination, education of the membership about colonialism, and activism to promote the release of the political prisoners;

THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED:

\* The National Lawyers Guild (NLG) reaffirms its support for efforts to end the U.S. colonial regime in Puerto Rico;

\* The NLG reiterates its call on President Barack Obama to order the immediate release of Oscar López Rivera and Norberto González Claudio;

\* The International Committee, Task Force on the Americas, and the Puerto Rico Subcommittee will continue to work to educate all NLG members regarding the colonial situation of Puerto Rico and the political prisoners who remain in U.S. prisons;

\* The International Committee, Task Force on the Americas, and the Puerto Rico Subcommittee will continue to work with and encourage NLG chapters and to obtain further resolutions from civic groups and political entities, in support of the release of Puerto Rico's political prisoners.

Submitted for approval at the Annual Convention in Chicago, September 2014

Submitted by: Natasha Lycia Ora Bannan, Judith Berkan and Jan Susler (Co-Chairs, Puerto Rico Subcommittee of the International Committee; Natasha Lycia Ora Bannan, Jeanne Mirer and Suzanne Adely (Co-Chairs, International Committee); and Judy Somberg (Chair, Task Force of the Americas). Contact Jan Susler, [jsusler@gmail.com](mailto:jsusler@gmail.com), 773.235.0070.

Implementation: International Committee, Task Force of the Americas, Puerto Rico Subcommittee will continue to work to educate all NLG members regarding the colonial situation of Puerto Rico and the political prisoners who remain in U.S. prisons and will continue to work with and encourage NLG chapters and to obtain further resolutions from civic groups and political entities, in support of the release of Puerto Rico's political prisoners.

The Puerto Rico Subcommittee will provide to the President and the NEC, the International Committee, and the Task Force of the Americas, press releases and letters to articulate the NLG's reaffirmation of its support for efforts to end the U.S. colonial regime in Puerto Rico and

reiteration of its call on President Barack Obama to order the immediate release of Oscar López Rivera and Norberto González Claudio.

This Resolution has the consent of the International Committee, Task Force of the Americas, Puerto Rico Subcommittee.