



## **Declaration of Solidarity with Cuba, Cuban Culture and the Cuban Revolution**

**03 Nov 2021**

The Irish Chapter of the Network in Defence of Humanity (REDH) gladly joins the many artists, writers, intellectuals and members of civil society who have publicly voiced their backing for the declaration of solidarity with Cuban artists and the Cuban people published in *La Jornada* in Mexico, in response to a spurious set of lies bankrolled by a corrupt, dying empire.

The attempt by US-funded mercenaries to instigate a boycott of the Havana Biennial and of Cuban culture more widely is yet another desperate attempt to attack Cuba, its people, its sovereignty and its culture. In addition to the criminal economic blockade, the attempt to block authentic Cuban culture is malicious, hypocritical and irrational.

Dollars are the antithesis of culture. Capitalism is the antithesis of culture. Imperialism is the antithesis of culture. Unlike the degraded, materialistic world that seeks to punish Cuba for rejecting its hegemony, the Cuban Revolution created a space in which culture belongs to everyone, in which everyone has the chance to create and to speak and to learn. This wonderful, egalitarian hospitality has transformed Cuba and it has enhanced the world through its example.

Art is nothing without truth. A campaign of lies has nothing to do with art. Those who would reduce culture to the property of elites, or to a commodity that only some can afford to buy, have already violated the meaning and essence of culture.

In Ireland, we are honoured that the great Cuban poet Bonifacio Byrne was of Irish descent, that the Irish abolitionist Richard R. Madden helped publish the writings of the liberated Cuban slave Juan Francisco Manzano, that in O'Reilly Street in Havana it is written that we and the Cubans are 'two island peoples in the same sea of struggle and hope'. We look forward to continuing to strengthen our cultural connections, partnerships and solidarity with Cuba and revolutionary Cuban artists and writers will always receive a warm welcome in Ireland. *To defend culture is to defend the Revolution. ¡Sí a la Bienal de La Habana!*

Dr Aaron Kelly, On Behalf of the Committee of the Irish Chapter of the Network in Defence of Humanity.