

“Assisting Independent Trade Unions in Cuba”

Presenters

Jaqueline H. Arroyo

Ms. Arroyo is the founder and President of the Afro-Cuban Alliance, Inc. (ACA), a nonprofit, charitable and educational organization established in South Florida in 2004. ACA’s mission is to stimulate awareness and debate on Afro-Cuban issues and democracy in Cuba. In 2005, Ms. Arroyo began publishing a quarterly journal entitled *Islas*. This publication is dedicated to promoting genuine dialogue on race and race-relations in Cuba. *Islas’* goal is to inform Cubans of African descent on the island and in exile about civil rights, the hidden history of slavery and racial discrimination in Cuba, the experience of civil rights movements, and tools to organize and bring about change. The journal achieves its goal by working with and soliciting articles from Afro-Cubans and from individuals of African descent throughout the world; gaining their perspectives and experiences on the status of persons of African descent in their countries and the conditions and struggles they are facing. *Islas* is written in both Spanish and English. Its writers span four of the seven continents--North America, South America, Europe, and Africa—as well as the Caribbean islands. On average, more than 50 percent of the articles in each issue are written by authors living on the island of Cuba. Its readership includes individuals in more than 20 countries.

Gerardo Becerra

Mr. Becerra is President and a charter member of International Longshoremen’s Association (ILA) Local 1922 in Miami, Florida. He has served as President for Locals 1922 and 1922-1 since 2005, when he also was elected an ILA South Atlantic and Gulf Coast District (SAGCD) Vice President. Mr. Becerra came to the United States from Cuba in 1960 and served in the U.S. Army from 1962-1963. He became a longshoreman in 1964 and in 1965, when his local was formed; he signed one of its first union cards. Mr. Becerra worked as a checker and served as the local’s Business Agent until he was elected as its Vice President in the early 1980s. He is currently an Executive Board Member of the national Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA) and is President of the LCLAA South Florida chapter. He is also a Vice President of the Florida AFL-CIO serving the LCLAA constituency group. In 2005 he was recognized by the membership of Local 1922 for 40 years of dedicated service to the ILA. He and his wife Carmen reside in Miami, Florida and have two children and two grandchildren.

Joel Brito

Mr. Brito is Executive Director of the International Group for Corporate Social Responsibility in Cuba (GIRSCC). He is recognized as one of the leading experts on Cuban labor issues and has extensive experience both inside and outside Cuba in advocating for the rights of Cuban workers. Mr. Brito was a member of the National Committee of the Central de Trabajadores de Cuba (CTC); a political liaison to the International Labor Organization (ILO); an economic and labor advisor to the CTC Secretary General; Director, Systems Organization, Employment, and Employee Safety and Protection, CTC; and Director, Auditing Department, CTC. He has a BA in Economics from the University of Havana. He has received professional training with ILO in such areas as International Labor Standards, Formulation of Employment and Salary Policies, among others. He also received an AA in Accounting and Finance from Fachschule für Finanzwirtschaft, the Financial and Economics College in Gotha, East Germany.

Eric Chenoweth

Mr. Chenoweth is co-director of the Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe (IDEE), which he founded in 1985 with Irena Lasota. IDEE provided substantial assistance to opposition groups at the forefront of the 1989-91 revolutions and since 1989 has helped democrats in the region to overcome communism’s legacy, oppose new forms of authoritarianism, and build democratic institutions. IDEE has provided help to more than 3,000 publications, civic, trade union, and human rights organizations, and opposition movements in 26 countries and regions of Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and Cuba. From 1997-2002, Mr. Chenoweth directed IDEE’s Civic Bridges program in Yugoslavia, providing special help to civic movements opposing the

Milosevic dictatorship. From 1981-1988, Mr. Chenoweth was Executive Director of the Committee in Support of Solidarity, co-founded with Ms. Lasota and others. He was Editor-in-Chief of *Uncaptive Minds*, a journal of independent opinion and analysis featuring democratic activists, thinkers, and journalists in the region (1988 to 1997). From 1987 to 1991, Mr. Chenoweth worked in the International Affairs Department of the American Federation for Teachers, where he was responsible for the Education for Democracy/International project. He worked sixteen months in the International Affairs Department of the AFL-CIO (1992-93) before returning to IDEE full time. Since 2005, Mr. Chenoweth also has worked as a consultant for the Albert Shanker Institute, working on a variety of projects.

Thomas R. Donahue

Mr. Donahue is President Emeritus of the AFL-CIO. A lifelong trade unionist, he served successively as a local union official, vice president of the Service Employees International Union, Assistant to the President of the AFL-CIO, Secretary-Treasurer (1979-1995) and President of the AFL-CIO (1995). He founded and is Chairman of the Committee For Free Trade Unionism, a Committee of labor leaders and activists promoting independent and democratic trade unionism. Mr. Donahue has supported the development of free and independent trade unions in a number of countries and has forged a close cooperation with Cuba's independent labor leaders and dissident movement. He served as U.S. Assistant Secretary of Labor for Labor-Management Relations from 1967 to 1969. From 2000 to 2005 he was Chairman of the Advisory Committee to the Secretary of State on Labor Diplomacy and was Chairman of the U.S. Special Trade Representative's Labor Advisory Committee from 1989 to 1995. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and was a member of its Board of Trustees for ten years. He is a Vice President of the Muscular Dystrophy Association. He is also a past member of the Board of Directors of the National Endowment for Democracy, the National Planning Association, the Work in America Institute, Manhattan College, and the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy. He holds a B.A. from Manhattan College and J.D. from Fordham University School of Law.

Stanley Gacek

Mr. Gacek is a labor attorney and the Associate Director of the AFL-CIO International Department. The AFL-CIO is the largest national trade union central in the United States. He is also on the Executive Board of TUCA, the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas, which speaks for over 45 million workers in the Western Hemisphere. Mr. Gacek is responsible for the AFL-CIO's relations with trade unions, governments and civil society organizations throughout the world, and, especially, in Latin America and the Caribbean. He is a member of TUCA's Executive Council and serves as the US Vice-President of COSATE (Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OAS Conference of Labor Ministers). Mr. Gacek is a member of the District of Columbia Bar Association, and received his BA from Harvard University and his law degree from Harvard Law School. He also is an adviser to the Democratic Party on Latin American issues.

Carl Gershman

Mr. Gershman is president of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), a private, congressionally supported grant-making institution with the mission to strengthen democratic nongovernmental institutions around the world. He presides over NED's grants programs in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and Latin America, and has overseen the creation of the quarterly *Journal of Democracy*, International Forum for Democratic Studies, and the Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellows Program. He took the lead in launching the World Movement for Democracy. He is a board member of the Albert Shanker Institute. Previously, Gershman was senior counselor to the U.S. Representative to the United Nations, a resident scholar at Freedom House and executive director of Social Democrats, USA. He has lectured extensively, has published numerous articles, is co-editor of *Israel, the Arabs and the Middle East*, and the author of *The Foreign Policy of the American Labor*. He has also received a number of U.S. and international awards.

Barbara Joe

Ms. Joe is the Acting Chair of the Rights Action Network, and a country specialist for Cuba and Haiti for Amnesty International (AI). She holds an M.A. in Public Administration/Political Theory and a BA in Sociology from the University of California, Berkeley. She also served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Honduras. She assists Amnesty International as an activist, investigator, editor and interpreter. Member of AI since 1981,

she was a group coordinator and a Central America coordinator. She was a recipient of the UN Association Human Rights award in December 2005. She travels extensively in the Caribbean region.

John T. Joyce

Mr. Joyce is Vice-Chair of the Committee for Free Trade Unionism (CFTU) and President of the International Construction Institute, a Rome based NGO working in developing countries and Central and Eastern Europe. Previously he was President of the International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers (BAC) from 1979 until 1999. He is currently a member of the Advisory Committee on Labor Diplomacy to the President and the Secretaries of State and Labor. Joyce was a member of the AFL-CIO Executive Council from 1984 to 1999, and served as chairman of its Committee on National Defense, and on the boards of the AFL-CIO institutes on Latin America, Africa and Asia. He was also Labor Chair of the International Labor Organization (ILO) Committee on the Application of Standards, Chair of the Democratic National Committee's Labor Committee, and Labor vice-chair of the Center for National Policy, and Co-chair of the Central American Democracy Watch. He has also served on the Executive Committees of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the Inter-American Organization of Workers (ORIT), and the International Federation of Building and Wood Workers. He has served on the boards of the National Endowment for Democracy, the National Democratic Institute, and the Commission on Central American Reconstruction and Redevelopment.

Eugenia Kemble

Ms. Kemble is the Executive Director of the Albert Shanker Institute, a non-profit organization endowed by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) in honor of the late AFT President Albert Shanker, and dedicated to fostering candid exchange on education labor and democracy issues. Additionally, the Institute publishes special reports for broad circulation among labor and educators. Ms. Kemble was special assistant to Mr. Shanker, a director of AFT's Educational Issues Dept., Executive Director of the AFL-CIO's Free Trade Union Institute (FTUI) which supported unions struggling for democracy around the world, most notably Solidarity in Poland.

Jorge F. Perez-Lopez

Dr. Perez-Lopez is an international economist. His research and writing on Cuba has focused on national accounts, economic policies and performance, energy, the sugar industry, and the external sector. His most recent books are *Corruption in Cuba: Castro and Beyond* (with Sergio Díaz-Briquets), University of Texas Press, 2006; *Cuba's Aborted Reform* (with Carmelo Mesa-Lago), University Press of Florida, 2005; and *Reinventing the Cuban Sugar Agro-industry* (co-edited with José Alvarez), Lexington Publishers, 2005. He is the editor of *Cuba in Transition*, the papers and proceedings of the annual meetings of the Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy. He holds a B.A. in Economics from the State University of New York at Buffalo and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Economics from the State University of New York at Albany.

Jay Mazur

Mr. Mazur is President Emeritus of UNITE (Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees), Chairman of the Amalgamated Bank of New York and President of the ILGWU 21st Century Heritage Foundation. He also maintains active membership on boards and in a leadership capacity of a number of other organizations. He was a Vice-President of the AFL CIO from 1986 to 2001, and chaired its International Affairs Committee from 1996 to 2001 and co-chaired the China Committee. He was a member of the President's Labor Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations (ACTPN) and has represented the American labor movement in many countries around the world; helping democratic labor movements in those countries to develop leadership and expertise. He has been a member of the Holocaust Memorial Council and of the US-South Africa Business Development Committee. He was also a member of the Executive Board of ORIT, the Western Hemisphere regional organization of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. He is currently a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the Trilateral Commission, the Ditchley Foundation and the board of the National Strategy Information Center. He was a Fellow on the subject of Globalization at the 2001 World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. Mr. Mazur was the AFL-CIO Chairman of the Cuba Committee and represented the AFL-CIO on an international trade union delegation to Cuba in 2000 which met with the dissidents.

Tom Melia

Mr. Melia has been Deputy Executive Director since May 2005. He was previously Director of Research at the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, and Adjunct Professor in the School of Foreign Service, at Georgetown University in Washington, DC where he continues to teach graduate courses about democracy promotion. For more than a dozen years, Melia held senior posts at the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), a leading non-governmental organization engaged in the promotion of democracy worldwide. From 1998 to 2001, he was the Institute's Vice President for Programs. Earlier, he managed the Institute's programs in Central and Eastern Europe (1988 to 1993), in the Middle East (1993 to 1996), and directed programs in more than a dozen African countries. Mr. Melia was Associate Director of the Free Trade Union Institute of the AFL-CIO (1986 to 1988). Prior to that he served for six years as Legislative Assistant for foreign and defense policy to U.S. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY). Thomas Melia received his M.A. in Africa Studies from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies.

Joaquin (Jack) Otero

Mr. Otero is a former international Vice President of the Transportation Communications Union (TCU/IAM); former Vice President of the AFL-CIO and former National President of the Latino labor group Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA). Mr. Otero is the Secretary of the Committee for Free Trade Unionism (CFTU). Mr. Otero served in the first Clinton Administration as Deputy Under Secretary of Labor for International Labor Affairs; Assistant Secretary-Designate for International Labor Affairs and as U.S. Representative to the Governing Body of the ILO. As a Cuban American he has long been committed to helping the development of free and independent trade unions in Cuba and has an extended family living in Cuba.

Armand Pereira

Mr. Pereira is the International Labor Organization (ILO) Representative to the Multilateral Institutions in Washington and Director of the ILO Office for the United States. He was Director of the ILO Office for Brazil between Jan 1998 and May 2005. He served the ILO at Headquarters in Geneva from Jan 1982 to Dec 1997 as Senior Economist in the Employment and Development Department (1982-1992), and as Industry Specialist in the Sectoral Activities Department (1993-1997). Before joining ILO in Jan 1982, he was an Assistant Professor and Researcher at Fundacao Getulio Vargas, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

John Thornton

Mr. Thornton is a 1992 graduate of Harvard Law School who has represented victims of a wide variety of violations of human rights, including torture, extrajudicial killing, slavery and forced labor. Mr. Thornton served as both coordinator and investigator on a project funded by the U.S. State Department to investigate the violence in the Darfur region of Sudan. He led teams of investigators who visited refugee camps in Chad and conducted witness interviews, resulting in the declaration by Secretary of State Colin Powell that what was happening constituted genocide. He is affiliated with the law firm do Campo & Thornton, with offices in Miami, Florida. Its attorneys are licensed in New York, New Jersey, Washington, DC and Florida.

José Miguel Vivanco

Mr. Vivanco holds a Master's degree in Law (LLM) from Harvard Law School. Mr. Vivanco is a Chilean lawyer educated at the University of Chile and Salamanca Law School, Spain. During 1986 and 1987 he worked as an attorney at Human Rights Watch, then known as Americas Watch. From 1987 to 1989, Mr. Vivanco was an attorney for the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States (OAS). In 1990 he founded the Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL) and served as its executive director until August 1994 (CEJIL is an NGO that files complaints of human rights violations before international bodies such as the UN and the OAS). In August 1994, Mr. Vivanco became executive director of the Americas Division of Human Rights Watch. He has also been Adjunct Professor of law at Georgetown University Law Center and the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University. Mr. Vivanco received the 2007 human rights award from the American Society of International Law. He has also received several scholarships and fellowships in the field of human rights, authored numerous academic articles and publications,

and written op-eds for prominent newspapers. He has also appeared on a variety of television programs in both English and Spanish, notably on CNN, BBC, PBS, NBC and ABC.

Randi Weingarten

Ms. Weingarten was elected president of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) in July, 2008. The AFT represents more than 1.4-million-member teachers; paraprofessionals and school-related personnel; higher education faculty and staff; nurses and other healthcare professionals; and local, state and federal employees. As an AFT vice president since 1997, she has been involved in every major AFT policy initiative of the last decade. Weingarten remains president of the AFT's largest affiliate, the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), an office she has held since 1998. The UFT represents 110,000 non-supervisory educators in the New York City public school system, as well as home child care providers and other workers in health, law and education. Weingarten also leads New York City's Municipal Labor Committee (MLC), an umbrella organization for the city's 100-plus public sector unions. Weingarten is known as a reform-minded leader who is committed to improving schools, hospitals and public institutions for children, families and their communities. She spearheaded the opening of two union-operated public charter schools, which have significantly outperformed their Brooklyn home district. She partnered with Green Dot schools, which operates unionized charter schools in California, to start a high school in the South Bronx in September 2008. The UFT, under Weingarten, has worked closely with parents and community allies to make sure schools are safe and adequately funded. A teacher of history at Clara Barton High School in Brooklyn's Crown Heights from 1991 to 1997, Weingarten helped her students win several state and national awards debating constitutional issues. She holds degrees from Cornell University School of Industrial Relations and the Cardozo School of Law, and is a member of the Democratic National Committee and numerous professional, civic and philanthropic organizations.