



**Statement by José Miguel Vivanco
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News Conference on the Freedom to Travel to Cuba Act

Human Rights Watch fully supports the Freedom to Travel to Cuba Act, which would end a decades-old travel ban that violates international human rights law, has caused considerable suffering for families, and has failed completely to bring change to Cuba.

A report by Human Rights Watch, “Families Torn Apart,” documented the terrible human cost of these restrictions and found that they infringed upon the internationally recognized right to freedom of movement and violated the international prohibition on the involuntary separation of families.

Yet for all of its costs, this policy has proved completely ineffective when it comes to pressuring the Cuban government to dismantle its repressive machinery. The Freedom to Travel to Cuba Act is a necessary first step in replacing an ineffective, unilateral policy toward Cuba with a more targeted, multilateral approach.

To read the October 2005 Human Rights Watch report, “Families Torn Apart: The High Cost of US and Cuban Travel Restrictions,” please visit:

<http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2005/10/18/families-torn-apart>

For more of Human Rights Watch’s work on Cuba, please visit:

<http://www.hrw.org/en/americas/cuba>

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