

## Directorio Responds to Cuban American National Foundation Smear Campaign

The Cuban Democratic Directorate ("Directorio") today expressed outrage and disgust with the efforts of the CANF (Cuban American National Foundation) to smear Directorio's good name and spread lies about its activities.

"We are profoundly disappointed and dismayed that CANF has chosen this time in history to attack and lie about a fellow Cuban pro-democracy organization," said Orlando Gutierrez, National Secretary of Directorio. "We need to be united against the regime; not telling lies about each other. In the name of all Cubans, we call upon CANF to cease this divisive smear campaign, which surely the Cuban dictatorship must enjoy. "

Gutierrez continued, "Directorio is proud of its 18 years of struggle against the Communist suppression of democracy in Cuba. Directorio is a force for democratic change in Cuba."

CANF has issued a self-serving report claiming that Directorio 'egregiously misdirected' funds provided by the United States government through the Agency for International Development in order to support the independent civil society in Cuba. Among the lies found in the CANF "report" are:

**Lie #1:** Directorio spent funds destined by AID for on island work in Cuba outside of the island and mostly for US-based activities.

**The Truth:** (1) The Directorio's grant program with AID was for the promotion of an international network of support for the pro democracy movement in Cuba, **NOT** for work directly on the island. This program was highly successful as it has generated support for the pro democracy movement inside the island throughout the world.

**Lie # 2:** The Directorio misdirected funds destined by USAID for the pro democratic forces in Cuba on "salaries, employee benefits and office overhead."

**The Truth:** The CANF report grossly distorts numbers and fabricates categories that have nothing to do with the IRS reports on which it is supposedly based. It presents funds used for Directorio international activities as utilized for Directorio "office overhead," resulting in inflated figures that do not reflect the reality of our work. As an example, more than 70% of the \$451,397 presented as Directorio "office overhead" by CANF are actually international activities carried out in direct support of the pro democracy movement in Cuba.

**Lie #3:** The CANF report is an objective report aimed at improving the AID Cuba program.

**The Truth:** It is a self serving report designed to besmirch the name of other Cuban exile pro democracy organizations. Most pointedly: the CANF report singles out the Foundation for Human Rights in Cuba as one of two Cuban exile organizations deserving of praise for its work inside Cuba, yet **the report egregiously fails to disclose that the "Foundation for Human Rights in Cuba", is an institution fully controlled by the Cuban American National Foundation**, which operates out of the CANF office and uses the canf.org email.

Since its founding in 1990 the Cuban Democratic Directorate has struggled alongside the Cuban civic opposition and procured moral and logistical support for it both domestically and internationally. It is an internationally recognized organization working to bring about democratic change in Cuba.