

# AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION Inc.

---



Patron-in-Chief

His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd)  
Governor - General of the Commonwealth of Australia

21 December 2016

Mr Barack H. Obama  
President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington DC, USA

Dear President Obama,

**Re: Oscar López Rivera 87651-024, FCI Terre Haute**

As President of the Australian Council for Human Rights Education and present coordinator of the VII International Human Rights Education Conference (IHREC), that took place in Chile on December 12-15, 2015, I write to urge you for the immediate release of Oscar López Rivera, who has served 35 years in prison for his commitment to the independence of Puerto Rico.

During the VII IHREC, I learned about the case of Oscar Lopez and how his sentence of 70 years is completely disproportionate, taking into consideration that he was never convicted of hurting or killing anyone. As you may well know, at 73 years old, he has spent almost half his life in prison; his co-defendants, released long ago, are productive, law-abiding citizens. Oscar López is a decorated Vietnam veteran. Oscar López Rivera's incarceration violates basic principles of justice, democracy, and respect for human rights, all of which are cornerstones of the rule of law.

As you already know, support for his release is broad and growing in the U.S., Puerto Rico, and internationally, and includes labor (AFL-CIO, AFSCME, SEIU, Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA); the Latin American Association for Social and Collective medicine, ALAMES; the New York City Council, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus; churches and religious leaders including the United Church of Christ in the U.S. and the Catholic Bishops of Puerto Rico; the United Nations Decolonization Committee, five members of Congress, the governor of Puerto Rico, six presidents of Latin American nations, as well as several of your fellow Nobel Peace Prize Laureates, including Archbishop Desmond Tutu. From a human rights perspective, Oscar Lopez Rivera more than deserves the opportunity to benefit of the powers that the President of the United States has to release him.

I am convinced that as President of a Nation that strongly believes and is committed to the promotion and defence of human rights, you will release Oscar López Rivera before you leave office. The International Community, his family and supporters await him with open arms.

Yours sincerely,

**Dr Sev Ozdowski AM**  
President

cc. Robert A Zauzmer, United States Department of Justice, Office of The Pardon Attorney  
U.S. Department of Justice 950 Pennsylvania Ave, NW Washington DC 20530-0001

---

Australian Council for Human Rights Education Incorporated  
Assoc. number: Aoo41795J (Victoria) ABN: 61 424 259 933

EMAILS: Office: [ACHRE@live.com.au](mailto:ACHRE@live.com.au) President: Dr Sev Ozdowski AM [sevozdo@gmail.com](mailto:sevozdo@gmail.com)

WEBSITE: [www.humanrightseducationaustralia.com](http://www.humanrightseducationaustralia.com)