
Cuban 5 to Visit Venezuela

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Cuban national heroes known as the Cuban Five will be honored in Venezuela during an international tour. The Cuban Five will visit Venezuela next week, diplomatic sources in Caracas confirmed Sunday.

Cuba's embassy in Caracas has stated the Cuban Five will begin an official tour of Venezuela on Monday. The group is expected to visit six Venezuelan states, starting in Caracas. Caracas mayor Jorge Rodriguez is expected to hand the Cuban Five the keys to the city in an official ceremony during the tour.

The group is also set to visit the remains of former President Hugo Chavez. During his time as president, Chavez was an ardent supporter of the Cuban Five. RELATED: teleSUR Interviews Fernando Gonzalez of the Cuban Five The Cuban Five were imprisoned in the U.S. in 1998 and sentenced in 2001, accused of espionage.

They had been monitoring Miami-based terrorist groups plotting to attack Cuba, and carried out no known espionage against the U.S. government. They were therefore held without bail for 33 months between arrest and trial.

They were kept in solitary confinement for 17 months and completely cut off from communication with the outside world. Two of them are U.S. citizens, born there after their parents fled the brutal U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista.

The five men are Gerardo Hernandez, Ramon Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando Gonzalez and Rene Gonzalez. Today in Cuba, the Cuban Five are widely viewed as national heroes. The last members of the group were released by the U.S. government in late 2014. The Cuban Five's upcoming visit to Venezuela will be the first official international tour of the entire group since the 2014 releases.