

## NORTH & SOUTH AMERICA



### **“I WAS PURPOSELY INFECTED WITH HIV IN PRISON BY AGENTS OF THE CUBAN STATE”**

Against the backdrop of the International Human Rights Day on December 10th, 2019, the international community is urged to take a closer look at Cuba again. Civil rights activists and dissidents as well as their families are being harassed, arrested arbitrarily and have to fear for their lives. This can be seen very clearly in the case of the Cuban biologist and environmental activist Dr. Ariel Ruiz Urquiola, who will return to his home country on December 10th. The political prisoner has been invited by the International Society for Human Rights (ISHR) in Frankfurt am Main/Germany, where he talked about his hunger strike and his infection with HIV by agents of the State.

When Dr. Ariel Ruiz Urquiola accused the Cuban government in his research projects of destroying the environment, he was harassed in several ways. The authorities tried to withdraw his teaching license and to end his academic career.

“When I was arrested, I was demonstrably still healthy, but I have been infected with HIV in prison on purpose”, says Dr. Ariel Ruiz Urquiola.

### **Repression because of research projects**

“I was purposely infected with HIV in prison by Agents of the Cuban State” | 2

“I was purposely infected with HIV in prison by Agents of the Cuban State” | 3

“I was purposely infected with HIV in prison by Agents of the Cuban State” | 4

The ISHR notes that the Cuban regime harasses and bullies systematically highly qualified dissidents, who could advance the country with their knowledge and reputation. When the environmental activist Dr. Ariel Ruiz Urquiola returns to Havana on the International Day of Human Rights, he - as well as other Cuban dissidents - urgently needs the protection of the international community.

*Martin Lessenthin, ISHR Germany*