

# Aftenposten

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## Cuban Ambassador Reprimanded for the Third Time

For the third time, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has called Cuba's ambassador in for a serious talk regarding his inappropriate language and behavior. The Cuban embassy called Norwegian parliament member Jan Tore Sanner, a "banana politician," who mingles with terrorists.

Jan Tore Sanner is deputy for the Høyre party and its finance politician in parliament. But according to the Cuban embassy in Oslo, he is more than that. "Sanner is a conservative banana politician who follows the instructions of the US government. He also has close contact with terrorists in Miami and with the boss of all bosses of Miami's mafia, Mel Martinez," writes the Cuban embassy in a recent letter. Martinez is a Republican senator from Florida. Sanner met with him and several other members of the American Congress during a visit to Washington in April, as part of an international campaign for the release of imprisoned Cuban journalist Normando Hernandez Gonzales.

Cuban Ambassador Rogerio Santana has already been called twice by the foreign ministry and reprimanded for improper language concerning Mr. Sanner. In his last attack on Sanner in March, the Cuban ambassador called him an "insect." Now the ministry has stated that it has had enough of this abusive language and Santana is to be called again for the third time.

### He has to learn good manners

"In Norway we have freedom of speech – including for ambassadors. But this kind of language is unacceptable. Norway expects ambassadors to abide by basic local customs, and to behave in a civilized manner. Mr. Santana's remarks regarding Mr. Sanner are totally against good manners and not the way we do things in Norway. We have instructed the Cuban embassy about this several times, as well as the ambassador, and we will continue doing so until this behavior stops," said Foreign Ministry spokesperson and vice director Ragnhild Imerslund.

Sanner has been involved with the International Committee for Democracy in Cuba, founded by former Czech dissident and former President Vaclav Havel. But, according to the Cuban embassy, in reality, the committee is, "an interventionist instrument founded and financed by the Bush Administration in the United States in 2003, as part of President Bush's colonial policies against Cuba."

### Agent for the USA

Similarly, Hernandez Gonzales, who earlier this year was awarded the Norwegian Authors' Union's prize for free speech for his critical articles about Cuba's school and health system, is,

according to the Cuban embassy in Oslo: "one of 75 US agents, mercenaries and enemies of the Cuban nation, convicted by overwhelming evidence in 2003, for participating in a conspiracy against Cuba – organized and paid for by the Bush administration."

"I have met Hernandez's mother in Miami. Her son is now so sick and weak that many fear he will die in prison due to bad treatment," said Sanner. He warns the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs against "coddling" the Cuban embassy.

### **Had to send a clear and strong message**

"Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Støre needs to handle this personally to send a clear message," stated Sanner. He said that the next step must be to reverse the normalization policies the socialist government of Norway started after taking power in 2005. Dissidents must again be invited to Constitution Day celebrations on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May in the Norwegian embassy in Havana. They should also be allowed to use the embassy's free internet services, he said.

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