



Office of the President

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Cardinal Francis George, OMI
Archbishop of Chicago

September 11, 2008

The Honorable George W. Bush
President
The White House
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. President:

In light of the devastation and humanitarian disaster caused by recent hurricanes in Cuba and the efforts of extended families, friends and organizations to reach those in need, I urge you to suspend – even temporarily - Treasury and Commerce Department restrictions and licensing requirements for humanitarian travel and remittances by American citizens and assistance by not-for-profit organizations.

At times of crisis, there are simple and basic acts of charity on which people rely. Churches, as well as governments, urge people to reach out and respond with generosity to those in desperate need. The United States has a tradition of such assistance for which it can be rightly proud. At this time, all should be done to facilitate humanitarian assistance, be it through institutions like Catholic Relief Services, or through the generosity of individuals moved by the misfortune of their brothers and sisters. Removing restrictions on remittances and travel to Cuba are a necessary step which I urge you to take without delay.

In prayerful support for your efforts to assist all those affected by these ongoing weather emergencies, I remain

Sincerely yours,

Francis Cardinal George, OMI
Archbishop of Chicago
President