**I have been denied my right to an appeal, and I am prepared for the worst.**

I am totally convinced that under these conditions it is highly unlikely that the original sentence of the lower court will be overturned.

Tuesday, August 20, 2019 | Roberto Jesús Quiñones Haces

GUANTANAMO, Cuba. Last Saturday, August 16 at 5:40 p.m., I was subpoenaed to appear before the Lower Criminal Court of the People’s Tribunal of Guantanamo, to appear before it at 11:00 a.m. this Monday, August 19.

Said citation did not state its purpose, which is a violation of Article 86, Section 3 of Cuba’s Code of Criminal Proceedings. As I corroborated later, it also had nothing to do with Articles 173, 206, 281 or 313 of the Code of Criminal Proceedings, article numbers that were printed on the upper left-hand corner of the subpoena. I blame the absence of this information on the deliberate will [of the authorities] to prolong the psychological harassment of which my family and I are the target.

When I appeared at the Secretariat of the Lower Criminal Court of the Guantanamo Province People’s Court, I was informed about a document titled “Appeal Filing Decree” which, contrary to its title, does not include the file number of my appeal, which is, in fact, written on the subpoena I received on Friday, August 16, as Number 147 of 2019.

Said document states that the Lower Criminal Court, composed of judges Amalio Alfaro Matos, Yadira Giro Hernandez and Julio J. Tamayo Arévalo, decided not to hold the hearing –i.e., the appeals trial- and instead will proceed to issue its verdict without duly reviewing again the evidence produced at the municipal court, and what’s even worse, without listening to the testimony of the witnesses I proposed who would have been able to shed light on a trial that did not meet even the most basic aspects of due process. Therefore, there is no guarantee that the Appeal I filed with the Guantanamo Provincial Court will be reviewed with proper equity and depth because the judges will have no access to the additional evidence which would have provided a very different version of the facts previously accepted as true by the court that already sanctioned me.

I am totally convinced that under these conditions it is highly unlikely –if not downright impossible- that the verdict of the lower court will be overturned. I am prepared for the worst.

I hope I am wrong, but I do not feel optimistic about what’s in store for me. However, what I am sure of is that, with God’s help, I will face everything that’s coming, and that the record will show the names of all accomplices of this new act of injustice perpetrated against me by the dictatorship, and some day will have to answer for it.