

# An Open Letter to People of Faith

July 3, 1988

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

Sustained by the same love, the same spirit, and the same faith in Jesus Christ, we are African North Americans, Caribbeans and Cubans who have journeyed here to Havana for the Third Martin Luther King, Jr. Theological Seminar. We are women and men associated with the Caribbean Council of Churches, the Black Theology Project of the United States, the Study Center of the Ecumenical Council of Cuba, and the Baptist Workers' and Students' Council of Cuba.

For five days we have considered the theme, "Martin Luther King, Jr.: Theology and Action." After such reflection we better comprehend the importance of encounters like this Seminar which allow collective clarification of our roles as Christians confronting not only racism, but political, religious, cultural, and ideological discrimination.

We collectively studied the biblical texts and reaffirmed our belief that discrimination based on human differences has been established by human beings, not by God who created us and redeemed us all equally by the death of Jesus upon the cross (Acts 17:26).

We have studied the historical significance of Martin Luther King, Jr., his personal integrity, and his active struggle for civil rights and justice for all people.

From insights revealed by our detailed study of the cultural and theological realities of African American Christians and Christians of Cuba, we become particularly sensitive to our need for more knowledge regarding the realities of sisters and brothers of the Caribbean. We revealed to ourselves, from the Cuba Church in its transformative context, the difficulties faced by the Church in pursuing its Christian perspective of a just society when there are no models. We also revealed to ourselves the power of music of the faith and the capacity of young people to enrich our experience.

We recommit ourselves to the theology and action of Martin Luther King, Jr., with full knowledge that what we have learned in Cuba is significant for all peoples of African ancestry, peoples under oppression, and peoples struggling for justice everywhere—Southern Africa, Central America, and Pacific Islands, and throughout the world.

We ask the enabling power of Jesus Christ to accompany us on this journey toward Justice.