

# HALF-MILLION MARCH FOR ELIAN'S RETURN TO CUBA THE WOMEN WAVED FLAGS AND SHOUTED SLOGANS. AUTHORITIES ORGANIZED THE PROTEST. CASTRO MADE A RARE APPEARANCE.

The Philadelphia Inquirer

JUNE 3, 2000 Saturday D EDITION

Copyright 2000 Philadelphia Newspapers, LLC All Rights Reserved

**The Philadelphia Inquirer**

Found on Philly.com

**Section:** NATIONAL; Pg. A03

**Length:** 478 words

**Byline:** Anita Snow, ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Dateline:** HAVANA

## **Body**

---

**Shouting** "Bring back Elian" and "Down with the lies," a **half-million women** answered Cuban President Fidel **Castro's** call yesterday to **protest** another delay in Elian Gonzalez's **return** to his communist homeland.

The **women waved** small Cuban **flags** and **marched** soldierlike along Havana's main coastal highway, in step with a uniformed military band.

Making a **rare appearance** at a large outdoor event, **Castro** showed up to greet the **women** and listen to political speeches by children in school uniforms and to folk-music performances by young adults.

"We Cubans are accustomed to fighting!" a female teacher in her 20s **shouted** to the marchers from a stage erected in front of the U.S. Interests Section, the American mission here. "People of **Cuba**, we cannot grow faint in combat!"

Leading the **march** were **Elian's** grandmothers, Raquel Rodriguez and Mariela Quintana. They were accompanied by Vilma Espin, president of the Federation of Cuban **Women** and the wife of the defense minister, Gen. Raul **Castro**, Fidel **Castro's** brother.

On Thursday, a U.S. appellate court panel sided with **Elian's** father, Juan Miguel Gonzalez, ruling that immigration officials were entitled to deny an asylum hearing for the 6-year-old boy. But under the ruling, Elian must remain in the United States for 14 days to give his Miami relatives a chance to appeal, and then another week after that.

Cubans had hoped the child would **return** home with his father immediately after the ruling.

"We will not cross our arms in the face of this prolonging of the injustice and the crime," **Cuba's** government said Thursday night in a statement calling for the largest mass mobilization in one city since the beginning of the international custody dispute in late November.

The statement decried what it called **Elian's** "cruel and interminable wait to **return** to the bosom of his family."

HALF-MILLION MARCH FOR ELIAN'S RETURN TO CUBA THE WOMEN WAVED FLAGS AND SHOUTED SLOGANS. AUTHORITIES ORGANIZED THE PROTEST. CASTRO MADE A RARE APPEARANCE.

A similar "**March** of the Combatant Mothers" was held in January with about 100,000 participants. An estimated two million people rallied simultaneously in a chain of **protests** across the length of the island in December.

**Elian's** mother and 10 others died in November when their boat sank during a journey from **Cuba** to the United States. Two men rescued Elian off the Florida coast after finding him floating on an inner tube.

The boy's Miami relatives were given temporary custody of Elian, who immediately became the subject of an international tug-of-war. Juan Miguel Gonzalez traveled to the United States on April 6 in hopes of reclaiming his son and **returning** with him to **Cuba**, but the Miami relatives refused to turn the child over to his father.

Father and son were reunited April 22 after Elian was taken forcibly from the Miami relatives' home during a federal raid. Elian has since lived with his father in the Washington area while waiting for the U.S. judicial system to decide his fate.

## Graphic

---

PHOTO;

PHOTO

Thousands of Cubans **march** in Havana to **protest** another delay in the **return** of 6-year-old Elian Gonzalez to his communist homeland. The **march** yesterday was one of the largest mobilizations of Fidel **Castro's** six-month campaign to bring the boy home. Leading the **march** were **Elian's** grandmothers. (JOSE GOITIA, Associated Press)

## Classification

---

Language: ENGLISH

**Subject:** **PROTESTS** & DEMONSTRATIONS (89%); CHILD CUSTODY & SUPPORT (89%); **WOMEN** (78%); FAMILY LAW (75%); CHILDREN (75%); ADULTS (73%); POLITICAL ASYLUM (72%); LAW COURTS & TRIBUNALS (71%); APPEALS (71%); APPELLATE DECISIONS (71%); MUSIC (71%); IMMIGRATION (66%); APPEALS COURTS (66%); RESCUE OPERATIONS (63%)

**Organization:** FEDERATION OF CUBAN **WOMEN** (55%); FEDERATION OF CUBAN **WOMEN** (55%)

**Person:** FIDEL **CASTRO** (88%); RAUL **CASTRO** (79%)

**Geographic:** MIAMI, FL, USA (94%); HAVANA, **CUBA** (79%); FLORIDA, USA (79%); **CUBA** (96%); UNITED STATES (95%)

**Load-Date:** February 4, 2002