

To: Maninder.sidhu@parl.gc.ca; Maninder.sidhu@international.gc.ca;
CC: salman.arif@international.gc.ca; region4@international.gc.ca;
Subject: Canadian Aircrew in Dominican Republic

Dear Mr. Sidhu,

We are reaching out to you on behalf of Pivot Airlines, Unifor, Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), and the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) to request your urgent assistance in protecting the safety and security of the Canadian aircrew currently being held in the Dominican Republic. The safe return of this aircrew must be Canada's top priority during your upcoming visit to the country.

As you may know, on April 5, 2022, while conducting a commercial air charter, members of a Pivot Airlines crew discovered suspected contraband in a maintenance compartment of the aircraft during the course of their normal duties at the Punta Cana International Airport. In keeping with Transport Canada approved policies and international laws, the crew immediately reported the discovery to local and Canadian authorities.

Despite reporting the suspected contraband to authorities, the five Pivot crew members were immediately detained in the Dominican Republic, where they have been subject to unsafe and inhumane treatment within Dominican detention facilities. While we have recently been able to secure the crew's release on bail, a condition of their release was they must remain in the Dominican Republic until the matter is resolved.

Pivot Airlines, and the three unions representing the crew, remain deeply concerned for their safety and security while they remain in the Dominican Republic. Having been identified as the individuals who reported over 200kg+ of suspected contraband, the crew has faced constant threats to their safety, including explicit threats on their lives. While Pivot Airlines has taken every possible precaution, including hiring private security and regularly relocating the crew, it has become clear that additional political intervention is required.

The continued threats and prosecution of the Pivot Airlines crew also raises serious concerns for all Canadian travellers and employees travelling to and working in the Dominican Republic.

On behalf of the crew, we are requesting you formally intervene in this matter by calling on the Dominican Republic government to immediately allow the crew to safely return to Canada while committing to stay available for the Dominican justice system if needed.

Sincerely,

Eric Edmondson
CEO, Pivot Airlines

Mark Hancock

National President, CUPE

Lana Payne
Secretary-Treasurer, Unifor

Tim Perry
President, ALPA Canada