

March 9, 2016

BY EMAIL

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

On behalf of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) we are writing to express our condemnation of the assassination of Berta Cáceres, General Coordinator and Co-founder of the National Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH). We are also writing to express our deep concern for the safety of Gustavo Castro Soto, a Mexican activist from Otros Mundos, Chiapas, who witnessed and survived the assassination of Ms. Cáceres.

Ms. Cáceres' murder was witnessed by Gustavo Castro Soto, a Mexican citizen and colleague from the organization Otros Mundos Chiapas. Mr. Castro has fully participated in all aspects of the investigation into Ms. Cáceres' assassination. On Sunday, March 6, Mr. Castro attempted to leave Honduras legally and with protection from the Mexican Embassy in Honduras, but was detained by Honduran authorities at the airport under the argument that he had to give additional testimony, without having received prior notification of this. Honduran authorities are insisting on conducting additional interviews with Mr. Castro in Intibuca instead of from the safety of the Mexican Embassy in Tegucigalpa.

After assuring Mr. Soto verbally that he could leave Honduras after giving additional testimony, the Honduran Attorney General then issued a 30-day migratory alert requiring Mr. Soto to remain in Honduras, in spite of already having participated fully in the investigation.

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I strongly urge the Government of Canada to take the following actions:

- Urge the Honduran Government to revoke the migratory alert that keeps Gustavo Castro in Honduras and guarantee his safe and prompt return to Mexico;
- Urge the Mexican Government to maintain and strengthen measures for Gustavo's physical and psychological wellbeing in Honduras and safe return to Mexico;
- Urge for an independent investigation with international participation, given the widely recognized weakness of the Honduran justice system to ensure a full and impartial investigation into Berta Cáceres' assassination.

Sincerely,



MARK HANCOCK
National President



CHARLES FLEURY
National Secretary-Treasurer

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c.c.: T. Jarzebiak; M. Butler; D. Ivanochko; K. Cameron; S. Dion, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Government of Canada; H. Laverdière, NDP Critic, Foreign Affairs; T. Clement, Conservative Critic, Foreign Affairs; R. Fortin, Bloc Québécois Critic, Intergovernmental Affairs; E. May, Leader of the Green Party; Embassy of Honduras in Canada; Embassy of Mexico in Canada