

Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice



A national faith-based organization *founded in support of Unitarian values*

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President, Margaret Rao

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March 1st, 2017

Honourable Chrystia Freeland
Minister of Foreign Affairs,
House of Commons,
Ottawa, Canada K1A 0A6

c.c. Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould Minister of Justice

Dear Minister Freeland,

I am writing to you on behalf of Dr. Hassan Diab, a Canadian citizen, extradited to France in November 2014 for alleged participation in a bombing causing death near a synagogue in Paris in 1980. The extradition judge noted at the time that the case against Dr. Diab was “weak,” based on ‘unknown’ intelligence sources and a “very problematic” French handwriting analysis report. The alleged evidence against him would not hold up in a Canadian court of law. Dr. Diab’s lawyer stated, “People are extradited to stand trial, not to face investigation.”

For more than two years, Dr. Diab has been languishing in a segregated cell for 22 hours a day without recourse to a fair trial. On two occasions, in May and again in October of last year, investigating judges have ordered Dr. Diab released on bail, citing insufficient evidence. Each time, the release order was overturned by the French Court of Appeal—due, we believe, to the current political climate in France. His latest appeal, on February 9th of this year, was also denied. The next French court hearing is expected between mid-March and mid-April.

Our Unitarian principles, including ‘justice, equity and compassion in human relations’, call us to be a witness for justice on behalf of those who have not had access to fair treatment by the law. We, therefore, urge you and your Cabinet colleague, Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould, to seek a diplomatic solution to this ongoing miscarriage of justice so that Dr. Diab may return to Canada to be reunited with his wife and young family. Justice delayed is denied!

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Margaret Rao".

Margaret Rao

President, Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice