

Subject: Ensuring Justice for Hassan Diab

Dear Sir or Madam:

We, the Hassan Diab Support Committee, are writing to request your assistance in raising public awareness about Dr. Hassan Diab's case, and in ensuring the strict observance of justice in his case. We are a group of concerned citizens in North America and Europe dedicated to ensuring that Dr. Diab receives due process and fair treatment entitled to all accused under French law.

Dr. Diab is a Canadian citizen and university professor who was recently extradited from Canada to France in connection with a bombing that killed 4 and injured approximately 40 near a synagogue on the rue Copernic in Paris on October 3, 1980.

While we believe firmly in Hassan's innocence, we only ask that you join us in calling for a fair and transparent legal process, one that gives Hassan a real chance to demonstrate his innocence.

You may well ask why Dr. Diab's case should warrant special concern with regard to procedural fairness. In answer, we note that innocent men and women can, and sometimes are, wrongfully convicted and punished even in the best systems of justice. In Hassan's case, we further note that the risk of wrongful conviction is greatly increased due to the circumstances surrounding his case.

- Dr. Diab's was extradited to France based on an extremely unreliable handwriting analysis report that was discredited by five world-renowned handwriting experts who testified that an objective analysis would actually point to Dr. Diab's innocence.
- Two previous handwriting reports against Dr. Diab were withdrawn after it was shown that many of the comparison writings that were "matched" to those of the suspect were actually written by someone other than Dr. Diab.
- The Canadian extradition judge described the handwriting evidence against Dr. Diab as "very problematic", "convoluted", "very confusing", and with "conclusions that are suspect". He also stated that the case against Dr. Diab is "weak" and that "the prospects of conviction in the context of a fair trial seem unlikely".
- The rules under which anti-terrorism investigations and prosecutions operate allow for exceptional practices, such as the use of secret intelligence from unknown sources that cannot be tested or challenged. This runs contrary to protections put in place centuries ago to protect accused persons against wrongful conviction.
- Evidence showing that Dr. Diab's palm and finger prints do not match those of the suspect has been suppressed.
- There is a strong desire for closure and resolution of a deadly crime that has remained unsolved for decades.
- The accusations concern politically charged and emotionally loaded words like "terrorism" and "anti-semitism".
- Dr. Diab falls into social categories of "otherness", including being of Middle Eastern background.
- Dr. Diab has been torn away from all moral supports, including family, friends, and supporters who remain in his home country, Canada; and he must defend himself in an unfamiliar legal system and language.

These are just some of the many factors that increase the risk of wrongful conviction and impede the attainment of true justice in Dr. Diab's case.

Hassan received support from thousands of Canadians and numerous labour, human rights, academic, and Jewish organizations who expressed their concerns about the evidence in the case. These organizations include:

Amnesty International Canada
British Columbia Civil Liberties Association
Canadian Association of University Teachers
Canadian Civil Liberties Association
Canadian Union of Postal Workers
Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice
Civil Liberties Association - National Capital Region
Comité Justice Sociale des Soeurs Auxiliatrices
Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada
European Group for the Study of Deviance and Social Control
Independent Jewish Voices
International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group
Ligue des droits et libertés
National Union of Public and General Employees
Public Service Alliance of Canada
United Jewish People's Order

We believe it is a matter of great importance to the people of France and Canada that due process of law be strictly observed in Hassan's case, and most especially with regard to the presumption of innocence. Wrongful conviction will not bring justice to Hassan or to the victims of the rue Copernic attack.

Sincerely,

Rachel Anjorin
Judy Deutsch
Ria Heynen
Colin Stuart
Elizabeth Whitmore

Nick Aplin
Mary Foster
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