

# Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice

A national faith-based organization that supports Unitarian values through action



**August 16, 2023**

Dear Mr. Trudeau,

We are writing on behalf of the Canadian Unitarians for Social Justice (CUSJ) to draw your attention to **Dr. Hassan Diab** who has been wrongfully convicted.

Rev Frances Deverell was first introduced to Hassan Diab and his wife, Rania, in 2008, while she was Minister at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Ottawa. She has been a strong supporter of Hassan since then. As the current president, I represent the membership of CUSJ. We have been working tirelessly to help secure Hassan's release including financially.

Hassan was fighting for his life against false accusations of terrorism in the case of a Synagogue bombing in Paris.

Six years later, in 2014, Dr. Diab was extradited from Canada to France, after a very lengthy Extradition trial and Appeal. Canada was unable to stand up for a Canadian when the evidence was so illogical and very problematic. (as attested to by Both the Canadian Judge and the extradition Judge, Justice Maranger.)

Thus, despite the illogical and very problematic evidence Hassan spent over three years in a Paris high security jail, mostly in solitary confinement. During this period, every recommendation for bail or home confinement was refused.

France appointed two investigative judges to find the evidence to convict Diab. These judges (Jean-Marc Herbaut and Richard Foltzer), spent nearly three years meticulously investigating Hassan Diab's case while he remained in prison, then *concluded unequivocally that there existed no evidence to support sending Hassan to trial.*

In fact, they found evidence that he was not in France at all but rather in Lebanon, sitting an examination, when the bombing occurred. They ordered his unconditional release.

The French prosecutor appealed this order, and the Special Assize Court dismissed the findings of Herbaut and Foltzer and ordered a trial proceed. It took place April 3-21 of this year. Hassan did not attend in person, but watched on Zoom.

There was no new forensic evidence introduced in that trial so he was tried on the same inadequate or even falsified data that a Canadian Judge and the French investigative Judges had already rejected. It was apparent by the judge's actions and decisions that legitimate evidence was unnecessary as *a decision had already been made*.

It is difficult to avoid concluding that the decision to convict Diab in this sham trial is political in nature and has nothing to do with truth or justice.

For example: I was surprised to read that the court that tried him is not even a court of record. There is no record of the proceedings at all. In Canada, it would not be a legitimate court. Is this what we expect for our Canadian Citizens?

Mr. Trudeau, **it is time for our government to Act**. Hassan and his family have suffered enough.

They are Canadians and **therefore our Government has the obligation to protect Hassan** and *(based on the three-year investigation by Judges Herbaut and Folger)* **refuse any request from France for Hassan's Extradition**.

We also URGE you to take immediate steps to **reform Canada's Extradition Law** to ensure that such a miscarriage of justice can't happen again.

We look forward to your response.

Respectfully,

James Sannes, Current President, CUSJ,  
Rev Frances Deverall, Past President CUSJ