

THE SOCIETY FOR SOCIALIST STUDIES
LA SOCIÉTÉ D'ÉTUDES SOCIALISTES

Letter of Support for Hassan Diab



January 18, 2024

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,

The Society for Socialist Studies (a body of academics and social justice activists in Canada) condemns the April 2023 decision by the Assises Court in Paris, France's reliance on old, discredited evidence, and declared Dr. Hassan Diab guilty despite the ongoing presence of unequivocal exculpatory evidence. It is clear this was a rushed and unfair trial.

It is unconscionable that Dr. Diab has been sentenced to life in prison and a warrant was issued for this arrest. We urgently request that the Canadian government commit to refusing a possible second extradition request from France, and do everything in its power to protect Dr. Diab from this miscarriage of justice.

In this manifestly unfair trial:

- No new evidence was presented.
- Anonymous and unsourced secret intelligence were reintroduced.
- Journalists who were not witnesses to the events were called to give their 'opinions'.
- There are no official transcripts or recordings of the proceedings.
- A verdict was given in less than a day following the end of the trial.
- There is no appeal possible following an "in absentia" trial.

After his extradition from Canada in 2014, largely on the basis of a handwriting analysis report (the "Bisotti report") that was discredited by five world renowned experts from Britain, Canada, Switzerland and the United States, Hassan languished for over three years in a French prison, away from his family and home, and in near solitary confinement, while French authorities investigated him. There was no trial and there were no formal charges laid. In 2018, the investigating judges in charge dismissed the case and released Hassan in light of "consistent evidence" of his innocence. Since then, the only thing that has changed is that evidence of his innocence has become stronger.

Troublingly, the French Court of Appeal still ordered Dr. Diab's case to trial.

The victims of the 1980 Rue Copernic bombing and their families deserve justice. But justice cannot be achieved by scapegoating an innocent man. Official documents and testimonies of numerous witnesses show that Dr. Diab was not in France at the time of the bombing, and there is overwhelming evidence which exculpates Hassan from this crime, including exculpatory fingerprint and palm print evidence.

Mr. Prime Minister, in 2018 you stated, "I think, for Hassan Diab, we have to recognize first of all that what happened to him never should have happened. This is something that obviously was an extremely difficult situation to go through for himself and for his family, and that's why we've asked for an independent external review to look into exactly how this happened and make sure that it never happens again."

Hassan, his spouse, and their two young children have suffered enough.

A threat to Hassan Diab's right to a fair trial – and his human rights more broadly — is a threat to justice everywhere, and undermines the principles to which our Society is committed.

We call on you and your government to honour your words by taking immediate action to protect the fundamental human rights of Hassan Diab, and all Canadians, by taking two clear steps:

1. Give immediate assurances to Hassan Diab that Canada will not accept nor accede to a second request for his extradition;
2. Reform Canada's unjust extraditions laws.
