

QUAKER CONCERN

BY CANADIAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

Upholding human rights for Hassan Diab

By Sandra Wiens

In November 2025 I went to the Hassan Diab Support Committee's public event, *Seeking justice for Hassan Diab: almost 20 years of violated human rights*. CFSC has long supported Hassan and continues to ask that the Government of Canada refuse any second extradition request from France. At this event I was able to meet Hassan, his family, and the community that supports him. It was a hopeful evening full of nourishing food, information, and most of all—caring. Caring for Hassan and his family as well as caring for justice and human rights.

The Support Committee invited Alex Neve (CBC Massey Lecturer and former Amnesty International Canada Secretary General) and Donald Bayne (Hassan's lawyer) as guest speakers. On the heels of speaking dates across Canada for the Massey Lecture series, Alex remarked on the connection between universal human rights and the precarity Hassan faces.

In 2023 French courts disregarded evidence of his innocence and convicted him in absentia, using intelligence that would not be admissible in Canada. This marks 17 years and counting for Hassan and his family, living with uncertainty and being denied the universal rights that we are all supposed to have. His family continues to live in a prolonged state of limbo and distress.

Donald Bayne clarified the current situation, identifying that while it should be a justice issue independent of politics, Hassan's case can be characterised by two problems: one legal, one political.

The legal problem is the reality of extradition in Canada. Unlike a court case that has an outcome and finishes, an extradition case has no finality. It can come up again and again, as has occurred with Hassan. Also, while Canada allows the extradition of its citizens, France does not. This is something that could be changed through long-needed reforms to Canada's *Extradition act*.

The political problem is one that should not exist, as politicians should not direct an independent process. Yet Hassan's case has become politicised. The evidence in the case has been ignored for emotional and political ends. His experience is best described, then, as relentless persecution. While currently Hassan remains in limbo, a change in the Canadian government is all it would take to reactivate the case and cause a possible negative outcome, depending on the party in power.

That's a frustrating and deeply unjust reality for Hassan and his family. However, hope was present throughout the night. Care linked everyone there—and that gives me hope. Hope that support for Hassan will remain resilient and tenacious in the face of injustice. Hope that leaders in government will not allow an extradition of Hassan again.

Human rights belong to all of us collectively: to take them, use them, protect them, and—by extension—to protect each other. The responsibility to uphold human rights is ours, and it seems that failures to do so over the past decades are being felt now. Have we abdicated to our governments our responsibility for human rights? I think it has become clear that too many of us have, and by

doing so, Canadians have not activated our rights but rather softened their power. Hassan Diab's case is one such example of this failure. But I am hopeful that people are also standing up for and protecting human rights. Every way that we do that matters.

As the support committee states:

“It is time for Canada to take a principled stand. The government must unequivocally reject any future extradition of Hassan Diab and reaffirm its commitment to justice, human rights, and the protection of its citizens from wrongful persecution.”

If you feel led to support Hassan Diab you can take the following actions:

- Visit <https://JusticeForHassanDiab.org> to join the postcard campaign urging Canada to refuse any future extradition request and reform the Extradition act. Email diabsupport@gmail.com to request that postcards be mailed to you (for free!).
- Send a letter to Minister of Justice Sean Fraser, to urge him to refuse any future extradition request and put an end—once and for all—to this ongoing miscarriage of justice:
<https://iclmg.ca/support-diab>

Sandra Wiens is CFSC's Government Relations Representative.

Winter 2026 / Peace