<u>Rights Action commentary</u>
Canadian government suggests they are not getting involved in "internal Honduran matters" – Nonsense!

https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/day-47-of-jail-for-honduran-political-prisoner-edwin-espinal

Day #47 of jail for Honduran political prisoner Edwin Espinal

- Demand that Canadian government officials immediately visit Edwin, in the La Tolva military run jail, to attest to the abusive health, nutrition and hygienic living conditions
- Demand that Canadian Minister of Global Affairs, Chrystia Freeland, meet with human rights expert and activist Karen Spring, partner of Edwin Espinal, and her mother Janet Spring

Here, a letter sent to Ambassador James Hill, on March 6, 2018
- Below, what to do

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March 6, 2018

James K. Hill
Ambassador | Ambassadeur | Embajador
Embassy of Canada| Ambassade du Canada | Embajada de Canadá
Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras
Telephone | Téléphone | Telefono : + 506 388-3800
James.Hill@international.gc.ca

Re: Political prisoner Edwin Espinal and "Mr. Espinal's detention as an internal Honduran matter"

Dear Sir,

Greetings. I write in follow-up to a statement from the Canadian embassy in Honduras that the Honduran regime "undoubtedly view[s] Mr. Espinal's detention as an internal Honduran matter".

I have just completed a one week trip to Honduras, spending most of my time with Karen. Besides being a good friend, Karen worked with me at Rights Action from 2008-2014.

Of course the Honduran regime – when used generally, the term 'government' presumes the existence of real democracy and the operation of the rule of law – wants no person, no organization, no other government to investigate and denounce the situation of human rights violations and repression, corruption and impunity endemic in the country since the 2009 coup; let alone the killings, wounding, and arbitrary detention of pro-democracy/ anti-regime activists since the fraudulent elections of November 26, 2018; let alone one specific case in all this – that of Edwin Espinal.

But it is not a question of these being "internal Honduran matters" and therefore somehow 'off limits' to other governments and actors in the "international community".

In 2009, Canada – along with the U.S. – effectively endorsed the June 28 military coup, and then openly worked with and legitimized the post-coup regime of Micheletti. This was active U.S. and Canadian government involvement in and support for "internal" Honduran political, legal and military matters.

In 2009, 2013 and again in 2017, Canada – along with the U.S. – publicly endorsed elections that were deeply anti-democratic, characterized by fraud and repression. This was active Canadian government involvement in and support for matters "internal" to Honduras.

Starting in 2011, Canada actively promoted a Free Trade Agreement with successive post-coup regimes, said agreement having direct impacts on legal, economic and human rights matters "internal" to Honduras.

Since the 2009 coup, Canada actively and directly support the reform of Honduras' post-coup mining law with obvious direct involvement in and impact on matters "internal" to Honduras.

Since the coup, the Canadian government has – in various ways – actively supported Canadian companies and investors in mining, maquiladora garment sweatshops and tourism, with a long-list of serious implications for matters "internal" to Honduras.

Etc.

With respect, I can only demand that the Canadian government not hide behind this "internal Honduran matters" smokescreen, and rather prioritize direct investigation and denouncing of human rights abuses and cases of repression now endemic in the country; to specifically demand permission to visit Edwin in the La Tolva and bear witness to the health, nutrition and living conditions that he is forced to live in; and, to directly advocate for his immediate release and the dropping of all trumped up charges against him and the dozens of political prisoners.

Yes, these are complicated issues. Thus is a very unjust, unequal global order.

In the measure that the Canadian government is actively promoting our own business, investor and political interests in Honduras, openly maintaining relations with and legitimizing successive Honduran regimes and powerful business sectors, then the Canadian government has a bare minimum concomitant responsibility to actively ensure full respect for human rights, the rule of law and democratic practices.

Thank-you.

Grahame Russell, Rights Action
info@rightsaction.org

Copies to: Karen & Janet Spring, Canadian government officials

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More information
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Free EDWIN ESPINAL Libertad / #FreeEdwinEspinal #LibertadEdwinEspinal /

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www.facebook.com/RightsAction.org / https://twitter.com/RightsAction

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KEEP ON writing

United States
Contact directly your elected Senators, Congress members:
https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative

Heide Fulton: US Chief of Mission, Honduras, BronkeHM@state.gov
Jason Smith, Human Rights and Labor, SmithJA6@state.gov

Canada
Ambassador James Hill, Embassy of Canada in Costa Rica, Honduras and Nicaragua, James.Hill@international.gc.ca, tglpa@international.gc.ca
Minister Chrystia Freeland, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Global Affairs Canada, chrystia.freeland@parl.gc.ca, chrystia.freeland.c1d@parl.gc.ca, chrystia.freeland@international.gc.ca,

Canadian embassy for Honduras: Bertrand-Xavier Asselin, Bertrand-Xavier.Asselin@international.gc.ca; Isabelle Solon Helal, Isabelle.SolonHelal@international.gc.ca; Kyle Sundstrom, Kyle.Sundstrom@international.gc.ca

Directly contact your Member of Parliament and ask them as well to write Chrystia Freeland and James Hill: https://www.ourcommons.ca/Parliamentarians/en/members

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Tax-Deductible Donations (Canada & U.S.)
To support the work and struggle of our long-term partner groups in Honduras, responding to the human rights and repression crisis, including the political prisoners, make check payable to "Rights Action" and mail to:
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Other organizations
Honduras Solidarity Network: http://www.hondurassolidarity.org;
https://www.facebook.com/HondurasSolidarityNetwork; https://twitter.com/hondurassol
Witness for Peace: www.witnessforpeace.org; https://twitter.com/WitnessforPeace
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