

Update from Simcoe County Honduras Rights Monitor

**Canadian gov't advocating for political prisoner in Saudi Arabia (w Cdn family connection), but not in Honduras (w Cdn family connection)**

<https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/canadian-govt-advocating-for-political-prisoner-in-saudi-arabia-w-cdn-family-connection-but-not-in-honduras-w-cdn-family-connection>

*"If Canada makes a statement regarding the release of a political prisoner in Saudi Arabia, it must do so for Edwin Espinal in Honduras, who is a very loved member of the Spring family of Elmvale, Ontario."*

(Janet Spring, mother-in-law of Edwin Espinal, political prisoner in a Honduran maximum-security military jail)

**Free Edwin Espinal Now**

Press Release: For immediate release

Tegucigalpa, Honduras, August 10, 2018

- **Contact:** Dr. Janet Spring, [janet.spring@utoronto.ca](mailto:janet.spring@utoronto.ca), +504 9637-6056 (Honduras)

The Simcoe County Honduras Rights Monitor calls on the Canadian government to apply the same standards and expectations to human rights violations in Honduras as it does regarding Saudi Arabia. "It has been six months since we first urgently appealed to Chrystia Freeland and Justin Trudeau to help our family member Edwin Espinal and other political prisoners incarcerated in atrocious conditions in Honduras," said Janet Spring of Elmvale Ontario, in a statement today from Tegucigalpa.



At Supreme Court of Honduras, August 9, 2018. L-R: Karen Spring (Honduras Solidarity Network), Dr. Janet Spring (Mother), Maria Medina (Human Rights Defender), Prisila Alvarado (Lawyer of Edwin Espinal), Karina Flores (Human Rights FrontLine Defender)

"We consider it hypocrisy for Canada to ignore the desperate pleas coming from our family and from our rural community, for whose unwavering support we are so grateful. It's time for Mr. Trudeau and Ms. Freeland to make clear that Canada will cease political and financial support for the corrupt Hernandez government, until prisoners are allowed basic human rights in the legal process and their treatment meets basic civilized norms. Those prisoners like Edwin who have been arrested for political reasons must be released and all charges dropped."

Edwin has been incarcerated for over six months and has suffered greatly. Edwin and Raul have lost at least 35 pound due to lack of proper nutrition. The sanitation standards in the maximum-security prison are deplorable due to the lack of clean and sufficient water. Prisoners have access to water for only 5 minutes per day. Unflushed toilets, lack of fresh air, and insect infestation exacerbate sanitation levels as documented by the Canadian Ambassador to Honduras' office staff after they visited Edwin in July.

Prime Minister Trudeau recently remarked on Canada's stand on human rights abuses, "Canadians have always expected our government to speak strongly, firmly, clearly and politely about the need to respect human rights at home and around the world. We will continue to do that, we will continue to stand up for Canadian values and indeed for universal values and human rights at any occasion."

Spring said she is confident Espinal would be released if Canada took a firm stand and demanded his freedom. “If Canada makes a statement regarding the release of a political prisoner in Saudi Arabia, it must do so for Edwin Espinal in Honduras, who is a very loved member of the Spring family of Elmvale, Ontario.”

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**Keep on calling / Keep on writing  
(asking for responses, then calling and writing again)**

### **United States**

Contact directly your elected Senators (<https://whoismyrepresentative.com/>) and Congress members (<https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>) and make your demands known to them.

### **Canada**

Directly contact your Member of Parliament and make your demands known to them (<https://www.ourcommons.ca/Parliamentarians/en/members>) and ask them to write directly to:

Ambassador James Hill, Embassy of Canada in Costa Rica, Honduras and Nicaragua, [James.Hill@international.gc.ca](mailto:James.Hill@international.gc.ca), [tglpa@international.gc.ca](mailto:tglpa@international.gc.ca)  
Minister Chrystia Freeland, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Global Affairs Canada, 1-613-992-5234, 1-343-203-1851; [chrystia.freeland@parl.gc.ca](mailto:chrystia.freeland@parl.gc.ca), [chrystia.freeland.c1d@parl.gc.ca](mailto:chrystia.freeland.c1d@parl.gc.ca), [chrystia.freeland@international.gc.ca](mailto:chrystia.freeland@international.gc.ca)

### **Honduran Ambassador to Canada**

Sofia Cerrato Rodriguez: [ambassador@embassyhonduras.hn](mailto:ambassador@embassyhonduras.hn), 1-613-233-8900

### **Demands - short term**

The U.S. and Canadian governments must:

- Do an about face and rescind their “legitimization” of the Nov. 26, 2017 elections
- Condemn the multiple acts of electoral fraud carried out by government of Juan Orlando Hernandez
- Condemn the repression including the killing of over 40 pro-democracy protesters, and the illegal detentions of dozens of political prisoners, including Edwin Espinal
- Suspend all business and military-police-security relations with the government of Honduras, until the political / electoral crisis has been resolved and impartial justice processes are proceeded against the intellectual and material authors of the electoral fraud and stolen elections, and the endemic repression

### **Demands - medium term**

There must be legislative inquiries in the U.S. and Canada into the causes of Honduras’ now endemic repression and exploitation, corruption and impunity, with specific focus on the role played by the U.S. and Canadian governments:

- In support of the 2009 military coup

- In support and legitimization of fraudulent and violent elections in 2009, 2013 and 2017
- In support (in the case of Canada) of the promoting and signing of the potentially illegitimate “Free Trade Agreement” with the government of Honduras;
- In support of the expansion of corporate investments in Honduras (mining, garment “sweatshop” industry, bananas, hydro-electric dams, tourism, African palm, etc.), while turning a blind eye to and – in effect – benefitting from repression, fraud, corruption and impunity.

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**More information**

Karen Spring, Edwin Espinal’s partner & coordinator of Honduras Solidarity Network,  
[spring.kj@gmail.com](mailto:spring.kj@gmail.com)

Campaign to free Edwin Espinal and all political prisoners in Honduras:

[facebook](https://www.facebook.com/freeEDWINEESPINALlibertad/) - <https://www.facebook.com/freeEDWINEESPINALlibertad/>

[twitter](https://twitter.com/EdwinLibertad) - <https://twitter.com/EdwinLibertad>

[website](http://freeedwinespinallibertad.blogspot.com/) - <http://freeedwinespinallibertad.blogspot.com/>

email - [freeedwinespinal@gmail.com](mailto:freeedwinespinal@gmail.com)

Janet Spring, Simcoe Country Honduras Rights Monitor (Elmvale Ontario),

<https://simcoecountyhondurasrightsmonitor.wordpress.com/>

[janet.spring@utoronto.ca](mailto:janet.spring@utoronto.ca)

Grahame Russell, Rights Action

[info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org)

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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:

- U.S.: Box 50887, Washington DC, 20091-0887
- Canada: (Box 552) 351 Queen St. E, Toronto ON, M5A-1T8

Credit-Card Donations: <http://rightsaction.org/donate/>

Donations of stock? Write to: [info@rightsaction.org](mailto:info@rightsaction.org)

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