

Amnesty International Calls for End to Hassan Diab's Imprisonment as New Evidence Further Confirms His Innocence

Amnesty International calls Dr. Hassan Diab's continued imprisonment "a violation of international human rights norms". Additional independent witnesses and official documents further confirm Diab not in France at time of 1980 Paris bombing.

By [Hassan Diab Support Committee](#)

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On Wednesday, June 21, 2017, Amnesty International, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), and the Hassan Diab Support Committee held a press conference on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, urging the Canadian government to intervene with the French authorities to release Canadian citizen Dr. Hassan Diab on bail without delay.

Alex Neve, the Secretary General of Amnesty International Canada stated that

"Canada cannot casually stand by while the rights of a Canadian citizen continue to be so blatantly violated over what has now become an agonizingly prolonged period of time – violated by an ally from whom we should expect and demand so much better. Two and a half years is far too long for anyone's rights to be violated so cavalierly. When it involves a Canadian citizen, the Canadian government must act, and they must act now."

Don Bayne, Hassan Diab's Canadian lawyer said,



Dr. Hassan Diab (Source: Ottawa Citizen)

"There is overwhelming evidence that an innocent man is being detained for

an extensive and arbitrary period of time. Hassan has always stated that he is fully innocent. French investigators now say the evidence confirms his innocence. He has become in effect a political prisoner of the terror trauma in France [and French authorities] who do not want to look soft on terror.”

Chantal Vallerand spoke on behalf of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, saying

“CAUT is the national voice of 70,000 academic and general staff at over 120 universities and colleges across Canada. We’ve been gravely concerned by the violations of Hassan Diab’s civil liberties and human rights. We are today urging the government of Canada to intervene with French authorities in order to secure Dr. Diab’s release on bail. The Canadian government has a duty to protect the rights of its citizens and to uphold international human rights.”

The British Columbia Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA) and the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA) echoed similar calls for the Canadian government to bring Diab home.

In a significant development that solidifies Diab’s innocence, six independent witnesses testified that Diab was a student in Beirut in September and October 1980, and that he was studying for the exams and wrote and passed them at that time. This was confirmed by official documents from the university where Diab studied.

In a letter to Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland and Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould, Amnesty Canada expressed alarm at the continued detention of Mr. Diab and concern at the “apparently arbitrary decisions to continue to block Mr. Diab’s release on bail”. It added that

“Mr. Diab’s continuing detention in these circumstances contravenes France’s obligations under European and international human rights norms. The French Section of Amnesty International has raised our concerns about Mr. Diab’s case directly with the French government. Amnesty International urges the Canadian government to intervene with French authorities as well. We specifically urge that the Canadian government advocate for Hassan Diab’s release on bail without any further delay.”

Diab was extradited from Canada to France in November 2014 in connection with a 1980 bombing outside a synagogue in Paris. He has been held in pre-trial detention in France for over 2 ½ years. French investigating judges have delivered so far 6 judicial orders that Diab be released on bail, stating that there is “consistent evidence” that Diab was not in France at the time of the 1980 Paris attack. However, each time the prosecutor appealed and the French Court of Appeal quashed the release orders because of the political climate in France.

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