



Ken Neumann
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Via Email: pm@pm.gc.ca, justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca

Open Letter to Prime Minister Trudeau

Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

RE: Torex Gold Media Luna Mine in Guerrero Mexico; Labour Rights in Mexico

We write to follow up on our letter of November 23 to Minister Freeland, a copy of which is attached. That letter expressed the grave concern of our union over the deteriorating labour and human rights conditions in Mexico in the particular context of a violent and dangerous situation involving a mine operated by a subsidiary of Canadian firm Torex Gold Resources in the Mexican province of Guerrero.

As set out in our letter to Minister Freeland, the workers of the Media Luna mine have been on strike since November 3. The workers have demanded that the company withdraw recognition from the CTM (Confederation of Mexican Workers) and recognize the National Union of Mine, Metal, Steel and Related Workers ("Los Mineros"). On Saturday November 18, two local workers who had participated in protests were killed. The workers continue their strike, but there are fears that there will be more attacks against the strikers.

There has been no progress in this dispute since our letter to Minister Freeland, and we have not received any reply from Minister Freeland's office. We feel compelled to write to you because we remain very concerned at the possibility of further violence. We understand that the Canadian Government and the Embassy in Mexico City have been in touch with the Mexican Government and the Company, but we have seen no progress towards a resolution of the matter, despite the fact that both Torex and Los Mineros agree that the matter should be resolved by way of a vote of the workers.

United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union
Syndicat international des travailleurs unis de la métallurgie, du papier et de la foresterie, du caoutchouc,
de la fabrication, de l'énergie, des services et industries connexes


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More broadly, these tragic events underscore the need for a forceful approach by the Canadian government to the issue of labour rights in Mexico in the current NAFTA negotiations. In this context, we are alarmed by the introduction in the Mexican Senate on Thursday of labour legislation that purports to implement the Constitutional reforms that took effect in February. However, this new law will in fact promote precarious work by lifting legal restrictions on outsourcing and will further entrench the system of employer-dominated protection contracts that is the primary obstacle to freedom of association, as the Torex Gold case clearly demonstrates.

This anti-worker behavior by a Canadian mining company also underscores the need for an extractive industries Ombudsperson to ensure transparency and accountability in overseas operations of Canadian companies.

Finally, we reiterate our request that Minister Freeland meet with Napoleón Gomez Urrutia, the leader of Los Mineros, along with USW leadership, to discuss the Canadian government's approach to issues of labor rights in Mexico.

Sincerely,



Leo W. Gerard
International President
United Steelworkers



Ken Neumann
National Director for Canada
United Steelworkers



Napoleon Gomez Urrutia
President and General Secretary
Los Mineros

KN/slq