



Int Dept/Keth Thapper/gp

DATE
2012-12-10
YOUR DATE

OUR REFERENCE

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**Mr. Ricardo Martinelli
President of Panama, Panama City**

The Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO), representing 1.5 million members, is writing to you to inform you that we share the concerns and condemnations of several international organisations regarding the persecution of our fellow trade union leaders in Panama by your government.

We refer to the current legal persecution of 9 comrades in which the Public Prosecutor and the Judiciary have shown a biased attitude, favouring guidelines from other State bodies and using prison sentences to try and silence voices critical of the government. This is a long way from justice.

Similarly, we are aware of the brutal repression of the Colon People, in this instance by the National Police, following their rejection of Law 72 allowing for the sale of land in the Colon Free Zone. We are alarmed that once again, the repression had tragic consequences, resulting in four deaths, hundreds of injuries and the prosecution of individuals and trade unionists, particularly those in the construction sector. Meanwhile, there is very little hope of justice for these crimes as the Panamanian National Assembly refuses to set up an independent commission to investigate the murders and bring the culprits of these heinous crimes, affecting even children, to justice. Once again, a cloak of impunity protects the oppressors, as was also the case with the carnage in Changuinola and San Félix.

We ask the National Government of Panama to put a definitive halt to all forms of judicial persecution of Panamanian trade union leaders. We demand that you investigate the events that took place in Colón and impose exemplary punishments on those responsible for the crimes that occurred in this region and also those in Changuinola and San Felix. We know that justice has not been done in any of these cases. Furthermore, we ask that your government makes firm commitments to compensate the people of Colón, Changuinola and San Félix.

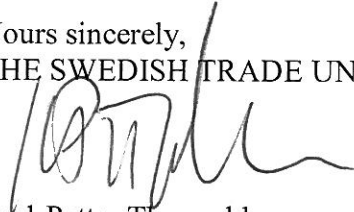
Finally, we would like to reiterate that our organisation, which is part of the international trade union movement, stands in solidarity with trade unionists

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The Swedish Trade Union Confederation

in Panama and pledges its support for all the actions they are undertaking to strengthen democracy and to defend workers' rights.

Yours sincerely,
THE SWEDISH TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (LO)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl-Petter Thorwaldsson', written over the printed name below.

Karl-Petter Thorwaldsson
President