



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

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March 22, 2006

His Excellency Boniface Alexandre
Interim President of the Republic of Haiti
Palais National
Port-au-Prince, Haiti

To His Excellency Bonface Alexandre:

Re: Release All Political Prisoners in Haiti by March 29, 2006

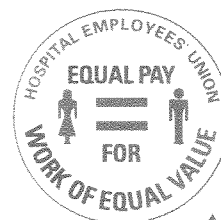
On behalf of the 42,000 members of the Hospital Employees' Union, I call on you to release all political prisoners currently being held in Haiti by March 29, 2006. This would be a fitting way to mark the 19th anniversary of Haiti's 1987 Constitution. I am particularly concerned about the political prisoners, particularly former Prime Minister Yvon Neptune, who are in ill health and may not live to see the inauguration of President-elect Preval, which now may be more than 8 weeks away.

As a man of the law, you know well, that the detention of **Yvon Neptune, Annette Auguste, Jacques Mathelier**, and dozens of others does not conform to Haitian legal procedures or respected Constitutional protections. You are also no doubt aware that this illegality has been well documented, by the United Nations, human rights groups such as Amnesty International, and even the U.S. State Department in its recent human rights report on Haiti. Many prisoners have been kept in jail for two years or more without any legal justification. Some, especially former Prime Minister Neptune, may not survive much longer if they are not released for medical treatment.

This illegal, politically-motivated detention causes much suffering to the prisoners and their families. It also undermines respect for all the law in Haiti, and revives a troubling precedent that most Haitians thought they had left behind on March 29, 1987. Finally, the existence of political prisoners in your Presidency undermines the good reputation you had worked so hard to build.

You have a short time left in which to make an important decision about your legacy. You can go down in history with the Duvaliers and other Presidents who held onto political prisoners to the very end, or you can be remembered as the President who released the political prisoners when he could.

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Please make March 29 a celebration of the Haitian Constitution, not a day of mourning for political prisoners and their families, and everyone who cares about justice in Haiti.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter of human rights. I will be following the cases of **Yvon Neptune** and the other political prisoners with great interest.

Sincerely,



Fred Muzin
President

FM/je

cc: Provincial Executive International Solidarity Committee
Jim Gorman, CUPE Ken Davidson, CUPE
Keith Martin, MP Bill Blaikie, MP
Wayne Marston, MP Alexa McDonough, MP
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