



December 19, 2007

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A2

By fax: 613-941-6900

Dear Prime Minister:

On behalf of the 3.2 million working Canadian men and women affiliated to the Canadian Labour Congress, I am writing to encourage you to extend Canada's support for the people and government of Bolivia, in the face of conflict surrounding the new Bolivian constitution. This action would be in line with the governments of nine Latin American countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela). It would be in line with a statement from the Organization of American States (OAS) and would also be in keeping with Canada's expressed interest in renewing and strengthening relations with our "neighborhood" of the Americas.

President Evo Morales was elected in December 2005, with a clear mandate, as the first Indigenous president of Bolivia representing a large Indigenous majority. President Morales fulfilled his promise to convene a Constituent Assembly, with the mandate to fully integrate the indigenous majorities in the political sphere and improve their situation after centuries of social injustice. The Constituent Assembly was to submit the constitutional text for approval by means of a referendum.

The opposition governors of five of the nine Bolivian departments (Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, Tarija, Beni and Pando) said Monday that they would not recognize the new constitution which is supported by President Evo Morales and had been approved on Sunday. They confirmed that four of them will apply their regional autonomy regardless of the constitution. This is clearly an attempt to destabilize the democratic process in Bolivia and should be rejected.

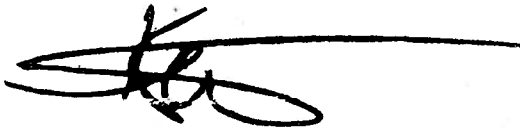
While the minority opposition has every right to have its voice heard in the constitutional process, their systematic interruption of the Constituent Assembly's sittings, as well as recent violent protests, calls for civil disobedience and ugly racist declarations are impeding the exercise of a democratic process.

The Canadian Labour Congress expresses its solidarity with the democratically elected government and its support for the constitutional reforms demanded by the majority of Bolivians.

We condemn the calls to violence and secession, these which are anti-democratic attempts to destabilize the country and deny the oppressed majority their right to reshape Bolivia on a more equitable basis and in recognition of its First Nations.

We have confidence that President Evo Morales will manage the current situation, with respect for democratic principles, and will ensure that Bolivian political forces maintain a climate of dialogue and understanding, rejecting all attempts that endanger the stability of the country's institutions and the democratically elected government.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K. Georgetti', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Kenneth V. Georgetti
President

cc. CLC Officers and Executive Assistants
CLC Executive Committee
The Honourable Maxime Bernier, Minister of Foreign Affairs
The Honourable Jean-Pierre Blackburn, Minister of Labour
The Honourable Jack Layton, New Democratic Party of Canada
The Honourable Stéphane Dion, Liberal Party of Canada
Mr. Gilles Duceppe, Bloc Québécois
Ms. Elizabeth May, Green Party of Canada
Embassy of Bolivia in Ottawa