

Canada Promotes Immigration as Migrant Hunger Strike Continues



Ottawa, November 4 (RHC)-- A group of migrants continue their third hunger strike of the year protesting Canada's immigration detention policy. Canada's Finance Minister Bill Morneau announced a new policy to cut waiting times for some immigrant workers as another group of migrants began the third week of their third hunger strike of the year in protest of Canada's controversial immigration detention policy.

The hunger strikers are calling on the Canadian government to end their practice of indefinitely jailing migrants and their children for years without criminal charges or access to any judicial process.

Canada is the only western country which ignores a U.N. recommendation that governments must release immigration detainees after a limited period if they cannot be safely deported to another country. In the United States, for example, this "presumptive period" is 90 days.

Some of the migrants on strike have spent up to 12 years in deplorable prison conditions which have led to the death of three people in immigration detention over the past seven months. A recent study reported that there are over 242 children in immigration detention in Canada.

During their last hunger strike in August, which lasted 19 days, Liberal Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale promised to reform the system by allocating \$138 million Canadian dollars to expand and "improve" immigration detention facilities. He refused to implement UN guidelines on immigration

detention.

This third strike comes after the recent deportation of Alvin Brown who challenged the Canadian government's policy in court. After five years of detention in a maximum security facility, Brown was suddenly deported in the dead of night on the eve of a ruling on his case, thus abruptly ending the legal challenge.

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