

**STRONGER
TOGETHER**

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PAUL HOWES National Secretary



19 February, 2010

Ambassador Martha Ortiz de Rosas
Embassy of Mexico in Australia
14 Perth Avenue
YARRALUMLA ACT 2600

VIA FACSIMILE: 02 6273 1190

Dear Ambassador,

The Australian Workers' Union has been watching closely the developments at the Cananea mine, owned by Grupo Mexico. We are concerned that effectively the 1200 plus mine union members have now been denied the basic human right to withdraw their labour.

The AWU is most concerned about the reports that the Mexican government is planning to use para-military police against the Cananea workers, who are simply demanding the right to be part of a democratic and free trade union.

We have been informed by our sister unions in the United States and Mexico that your government is preparing to take Cananea by force, to eliminate the most powerful independent union in Mexico.

The AWU was formed nearly 125 years ago and is Australia's oldest union, as well as this country's largest blue-collar union

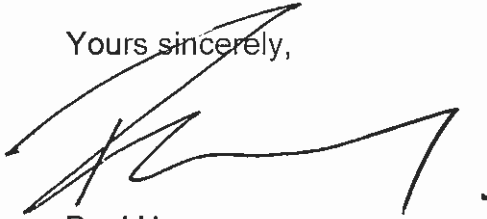
Our union initiated the creation of the Australian Labor Party after a violent police repression of a famous shearers strike at the end of the 19th century. That action was taken because we wanted to ensure working people had an effective democratic voice to overturn repressive laws.

We are very sensitive to any talk of police repression against working people and the denial of their democratic human rights. That's why we join with the many democratic trade unions across the globe who are watching the Cananea dispute with increasing concern for the lives of these workers and their families.

We will inform our Labor Government about the global union movement's concerns that Mexico is adopting repressive measures against these mine workers.

We urge your government to remove the troops from Cananea, and allow safe and unhindered passage for the exiled democratic leadership of the mine union to come back from Canada to negotiate a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Paul Howes', written over the 'Yours sincerely,' text.

Paul Howes
NATIONAL SECRETARY
THE AUSTRALIAN WORKERS' UNION
VICE PRESIDENT
AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF TRADE UNIONS

cc: The Hon. Stephen Smith MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs
Mr Jyrki Raina, General Secretary, International Metalworkers' Federation