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The Honourable Marco E. L. Mendicino, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
365 Laurier Avenue West, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 1L1

The Honourable Carla Qualtrough, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion
140 Promenade du Portage, Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0J9

July 2, 2020

Ministers Mendicino and Qualtrough,

Thank you for meeting with my colleagues Karen Cocq, Mary Gellatly and I on June 24, 2020 in regards to the COVID-19 crisis facing migrant and undocumented people and families, and migrant agricultural workers specifically. As you know, outbreaks in agriculture have continued to worsen since our conversation, and the Ontario government's response making it easier for some COVID-19 positive workers to be sent back to work will make matters worse. This has added further urgency to the crisis underway.

In our conversation, you agreed to meet with us again, and arrange meetings with your departments to address reforms to save lives.

We believe permanent resident status for all migrants is essential. We look forward to meeting with you at the earliest to discuss this, as well as other concrete measures to stop the loss of life and further spread of COVID-19 in migrant agricultural communities. This includes income supports for migrant workers affected by COVID-19; the possibility of stopping work at COVID-19 affected farms and ensuring rigorous and enforceable health and safety measures are in place; adequate healthcare; and enforcement measures that migrants can effectively and safely access. In the medium-term, we urge the creation of a national housing standard. We can provide substantive advice on these matters, directly from migrants and drawn from years of work in policy and legislative reform both at the provincial and federal levels.

We hope that we can convene a meeting soon with members of our national body the Migrant Rights Network to discuss regionally specific concerns and priorities. Please get in touch with me at hussan@migrantworkersalliance.org to finalize next steps.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Syed Hussan".

Syed Hussan
Executive Director, Migrant Workers Alliance for Change