

#FreeFred #FreeYves Campaign

**Template Message content for Government of Canada leaders
(You can modify the message you send)**

Dear [TITLE AND NAME INSERTED AUTOMATICALLY],

2016 is the decisive year for democracy in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Last year, the Government of the DR Congo dramatically increased its illegal detainment and imprisonment of pro-democracy activists. In late November, President Joseph Kabila indicated that he intends to postpone (or cancel) the 2016 presidential elections, and to contravene the Constitution by remaining in office beyond the end of his second and final term that ends on December 19, 2016.

As these events have unfolded over the past 12 months, Canada was silent.

I am writing to urge you to take action to ensure that the Government of Canada speaks up in a specific and effective way to support peace, democracy and human rights in the DR Congo.

Please add Canada's voice to the international call for:

1. President Kabila to make a public statement:
 - a. confirming that the 2016 presidential elections will be held on schedule this fall, and
 - b. confirming that he will stand aside on December 19, as is required by the Constitution; and for the
2. Immediate and unconditional release of Fred Bauma and Yves Makwambala, two young Congolese pro-democracy activists who have been illegally imprisoned since March 15, 2015.

Instead of the silence of the previous Government, I encourage you to employ Canada's diplomacy and leadership directly in its relations with the DR Congo, and through multilateral institutions, including la Francophonie, working with the Minister of International Development and La Francophonie, to champion the values of peace, democracy, and human rights.

Simply by paying attention and speaking up now, the Government of Canada can bring about real change with real results for the Congo. Canada can help improve the prospects for real peace, democracy, and human rights, and prevent this rich but troubled country from falling into dictatorship and renewed armed conflict.

On Tuesday February 16, just 4 weeks from now, the Congo's unified opposition groups are planning to retrace the steps of those who marched in 1992 to ask then President Mobutu for democracy, only to become the victims of a massacre by government forces.

I urge you to support the brave Congolese activists who are taking non-violent action at personal risk in the struggle for peace, democracy, human rights... and a Congo Spring.

I urge you to add the voice of Canada's political leaders to the long list of those demanding the immediate and unconditional release of pro-democracy youth leaders, Fred and Yves.

For more information: please visit www.pragmora.com or contact Dr. Glenys A. Babcock, President, Pragmora at gbabcock@pragmora.com)

Thank you for your time and attention to this very serious matter.

With respect,