



Leo W. Gerard
International President

August 27, 2018

Napoleón Gómez Urrutia
President and General Secretary
National Union of Mine, Metal, Steel and Related Workers of the Mexican Republic
Dr. Vértiz, No. 668, Col. Narvarte
México, D.F., México

Dear Napoleón,

As you prepare to return to Mexico to be sworn in as a Senator of the Mexican Republic, I wanted to take a moment not only to congratulate you on this historic achievement, but also to reflect on its significance for workers not only in Mexico but throughout North America and around the world.

Los Mineros have won a tremendous victory, for your families, the workers of Mexico, and the international working class.

Three Mexican presidents – Fox, Calderon, and Peña Nieto - tried to defeat you, but they all failed. Grupo México and other big mining and steel companies and their puppet unions stood in your way, but you rolled over them.

For this victory, the Mineros paid a heavy price. Today we remember the Mineros who gave their lives over the past 12 years in defense of your rights and your union: Héctor Álvarez Gómez, Mario Alberto Castillo, Reynaldo Hernández González, Juventino Flores Salas, Víctor Sahuanitla Peña, Marcelino Sahuanitla Peña, Quintín Salgado Salgado. There will be justice for these brothers!

We also remember the 65 workers who perished at Grupo México's mine at Pasta de Conchos, the many other Mineros who have died in preventable industrial "accidents," and the thousands affected by Grupo México's' toxic waste spill in the Río Sonora valley and other unnecessary acts of environmental contamination. There must be justice for all of the victims of government and corporate impunity.

The Steelworkers and Workers Uniting are proud to have stood shoulder to shoulder with you and Los Mineros in this fight. Even before the attempt by Vicente Fox to remove Napoleon from the union leadership in February 2006, our members in District 12 at the Asarco copper mines in Arizona had worked with Los Mineros in both Cananea and Arizona in their fight against Grupo Mexico. When you received word of an imminent threat of arrest while you were at Pasta de Conchos supporting the families

of the 65 miners killed by Grupo Mexico, we helped you and your family cross the U.S. border to Albuquerque, New Mexico where you were sheltered by our then District Director, Terry Bonds. But we knew that with Fox in Mexico and Bush in the White House, the U.S. would not be a safe place. So we helped you get to Vancouver, Canada, where you have led the struggle for the past 12 years, working from your office in District 3 of the United Steelworkers.

Over the past 13 years we have forged unbreakable bonds of solidarity. On May 26, 2005 we signed a Strategic Alliance, which was expanded and strengthened in the Solidarity Alliance signed at the 2011 USW International Convention. Last year, Los Mineros joined Workers Uniting, the Global Union formed by the USW and Unite the Union representing two million workers in Canada, Ireland, Mexico, the United Kingdom and the United States.

But important as they are, these alliances are just a reflection of the day to day struggles that our members have waged together.

- At Pasta de Conchos, the Steelworkers have visited the families of the victims of the 2006 industrial homicide, marched in commemorative events every year, and helped to organize global protests. And we will continue until our 65 brothers are rescued, their families receive apologies and proper compensation from the government and Grupo México, and the persons responsible for this crime are punished.

- In Lázaro Cárdenas, a Steelworkers and Workers Uniting delegation organized by USW District 7 has joined Los Mineros every April 20 for the past 10 years to remember the two workers killed in the 2006 strike, Héctor Álvarez Gómez and Mario Alberto Castillo. And we will continue until the officials responsible for their murders are punished.

- In Cananea, where Los Mineros have been on strike against Grupo México since July 30, 2007, our members from Asarco in District 12 have led our union in accompanying Los Mineros every step of the way in your long and bitter battle with this company. Since Grupo Mexico's toxic waste spill on August 6, 2014, we have expanded this fight to insist on justice and fair compensation for the tens of thousands of residents who have suffered illness and economic devastation, and to demand that Mexican citizens have the legal right to sue corporations for environmental crimes.

- We have collaborated in the long and victorious legal struggle to restore the union's legal recognition (*toma de nota*), to defeat all the false criminal charges against you and other union leaders, and to cancel the Interpol Red Notice which Interpol's internal review commission concluded was politically motivated.

- We have coordinated industrial strategy at ArcelorMittal, ASF-K, Dana, Grupo CH, Grupo México, and Peñasquito, and supported Los Mineros in organizing campaigns at Johnson Controls, PKC, Teksid, El Boleo, El Coronel, Excellon and Torex Gold to help stamp out protection contracts and establish democratic local unions under the banner of Los Mineros.

- We have strengthened our institutional cooperation through the participation of Los Mineros in the USW Leadership-Scholarship program and the Workers Uniting global leadership exchange and global youth Exchange programs, joint work with the USW

Women of Steel to create the Mineras de Acero, and participation in USW health and safety conferences and trainings, including the District 3 Summer School and the District 12 cross-border solidarity trainings.

- We have coordinated our political and policy work to win the creation of an Extractive Industries Ombudsperson to review the actions of Canadian mining companies, demand fundamental Constitutional and labor law reforms in Mexico to eliminate protection contracts and restore democratic unions and collective bargaining, and fight for enforceable labor rights protections in NAFTA and the Mexico-E.U. Free Trade Agreement.

Today, Los Mineros are stronger than ever before – in part because of international solidarity, but mostly because of your courage, visión and determination; the love and support of Oralia and all of your family; and the strength and solidarity of tens of thousands of Mineros.

In these 12 years, you have accomplished more than anyone ever thought possible. Not only have you defeated three Presidents and the giant mining and steel companies, but you have won the strongest labor contracts and the highest wages of any union in Mexico, while organizing thousands of new members. You have protected the health and safety of your members on the job and opened up great opportunities for women in your workplaces.

With your swearing-in to the Senate, a new world of possibilities begins for Los Mineros and the working class of Mexico. For the first time in decades, there is a real opportunity to transform the structures of worker representation, industrial justice and economic decision-making to make democratic representation, real collective bargaining, decent wages and pro-worker policies available to Mexican workers. This transformation would benefit not only workers in Mexico, but also their sisters and brothers in Canada and the United States who have suffered the unfair competition resulting from wage suppression in Mexico.

To make this opportunity a reality, we will have to fight hard.

- We must coordinate our political efforts in Mexico, Canada and the U.S. to ensure that a renegotiated NAFTA contains strong labor standards to guarantee workers' democratic control of their collective bargaining agreements and their unions, backed up by an effective trade enforcement mechanism.

- We must achieve a prompt reform of the Mexican Federal Labor Law that faithfully implements the 2017 Constitutional reform and ensures that workers will have access and the right to a free, secrets and personal vote on their collective bargaining agreements, and the right to determine their union representation democratically, free of procedural obstacles and employer domination and interference.

- We must win significant and immediate wage increases for Mexican workers.

- We must continue to strengthen our legal, political and industrial cooperation and integration to increase our institutional capacity expand and strengthen bargaining and organizing in key industries.

This will not be an easy fight. But I have confidence in your leadership. For 12 years you have resisted with courage and dignity the combined efforts of the Mexican government and Mexico's largest corporations to destroy you, your family and your union. You have led the union through legal, political and industrial battles with focus and determination, while systematically building the solidarity and support of the global labor movement. You have never given up and never given in, because you have the support of your members, your family, and trade unionists throughout the world. You have always made us proud, and I believe that in the near future we will be even prouder of what we can achieve together.

In closing, I want to thank the leaders and members of the United Steelworkers who have fought for you and Los Mineros over the past two decades – not because anyone told them to but because they knew it was the right thing to do. I want to thank Len McCluskey for all he has done to support you in the U.K. and around the world. I want to thank the members of Los Mineros who have fought tirelessly and with great dignity to defend their leader and their union, especially my dear friend Juan Linares who has inspired all of us with his courage. I want to thank your family and most especially Oralia, whose kindness and humanity have been an inspiration for me and for all of our members. Most of all I want to thank you, my brother and my friend for life, for showing me the real meaning of courage and dignity. I wish you tremendous success in the Senate, in the transformation of Mexico, and in the fight for a better world.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leo W. Gerard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'L' and 'G'.

Leo W. Gerard
International President