

Mr. Minister of Foreign Affairs
Mr. Francisco Bustillo Bonasso
PRESENT

We address the Minister to express our deep concern at the verification of various acts contrary to law, which are taking place in his Portfolio and which manifestly affect the human and labor rights of local hired Officials of Diplomatic Missions and Consular Offices of Uruguay.

We refer to situations that do not honor the impeccable record that our Uruguay has in terms of labor rights, as has been recognized by the Diplomatic Officials themselves during their invaluable efforts to achieve the best for our esteemed country.

Uruguay has a rich history in terms of labor rights, where general principles are respected and whose commitment to ensure an adequate business climate that provides competitiveness, quality work and decent conditions for its people, is recognized. The rule is that everyone, workers, businessmen and the State itself, are united in the interest of maintaining minimum standards of respect for these rights, even when there are different views and thoughts, which makes it an example to follow and which earns us the praise of many countries.

For all this, it saddens us to see that the Uruguayan State itself promotes situations of non-compliance, abuse, harassment and disregard for the human and labor rights of its workers. We are sadness to observe that many of these flagrant violations arise from the Ministry that you have the privilege of leading and that we, directly or indirectly, have the honor of being part of.

It is at least paradoxical that the breaches that cause us consternation and that motivate this letter originate in the Ministry that has promoted, accompanied, negotiated, signed and ratified many of those international agreements that ensure labor rights. Let us remember that even the Director of the ILO, Mr. Ruy Ryder, has recognized Uruguay's leadership in the labor rights agenda, where cutting-edge laws that were approved even before the creation of the ILO itself. Law 5,350 on the 8-hour working day is a clear example.

It is in this context that it is difficult for us to explain, by way of example, the abuse and harassment that our colleagues, the Officials of the Representation in Caracas, Venezuela, are suffering. A situation that has been covered by different national and international media, because the deviation from the good faith with which the parties must act in the fulfillment of the contracts of this Mission, is surprising.

Indeed, it is not a typical situation of negotiation for salary or working conditions improvement, in which the existence of differences in criteria and visions may be reasonable and even logical. This situation is a clear example of the subjugation of the rights of local employees, since it involves money of a salary nature, which the Mission retains but which does not belong to it. In other words, it is money that belongs to the workers and therefore the Ministry of Foreign Affairs cannot in any way dispose of, administer, resolve, modify or take any action without the due knowledge and consent of its legitimate owner. And much less do it retroactively and notoriously detrimental to the worker.

The impunity and arbitrariness with which the situation has been handled is worrying. This is such a clear and evident situation that irregular decisions and acts of pressure and harassment of workers must be brought to your attention with the confidence that measures will be taken to correct this unfair error.

Mr. Minister, from ASFUCOUREX we ask you to take the necessary measures to ensure unrestricted respect for Uruguay's impeccable record in terms of labor rights. A country brand that we have earned with much

effort and that is always recognized and mentioned by those who represent the interests of our country during the performance of their duties abroad.

We also request instances of dialogue and respect from all parties involved, avoiding unnecessary and unfair pressure. We urge the Minister to respect current labor contracts, applicable legislation and jurisprudence, the cultivation of good customs and good faith to seek a cordial and prompt resolution between both parties, which allows us to take care of and continue to feel proud of the trajectory of Uruguay on human and labor rights.

We renew to the Minister the assurances of our highest consideration.

*With kind regards,
ASFUCOUREX – Board of Directors*