

## LETTER PUBLISHED IN *THE GUARDIAN*, OCTOBER 10, 2014

We express our condolences and solidarity to Venezuela following the murder of Robert Serra (27), the national assembly's youngest parliamentarian, who was found dead in his home on October 1 (theguardian.com, 8 October).

Government officials have stated it was tied to a terrorist plot from extreme elements of the rightwing opposition, with the secretary general of the Union of South American Nations, former Colombian president Ernesto Samper, saying: "The assassination of the young legislator Robert Serra in Venezuela is a worrying sign of the infiltration of Colombian paramilitarism."

Worryingly, Serra's murder joins the list of other assassinations of government figures and the situation resembles the prelude to the overthrow of Salvador Allende in Chile, when sections of the Chilean opposition did not distance themselves from violent actions, including the assassination of a general.

We condemn this murder and other examples of extreme, anti-democratic violence aimed at destabilising Venezuela's elected government.

Yours,

**Ken Livingstone** *President, Venezuela Solidarity Campaign*, **Colin Burgon** *Labour Friends of Venezuela*, **Tariq Ali**, **Diane Abbott MP**, **Baroness Janet Royall** *Leader of the opposition in the House of Lords*, **Tony Burke** *Assistant general secretary, Unite the Union*, **Mike Wood MP**, **Elaine Smith MSP**, **Lord Nic Rea**, **George Galloway MP**, **Neil Findlay MSP**, **Katy Clark MP**, **Jeremy Corbyn MP**, **Mike Hedges**, **Welsh AM**, **Jenny Rathbone** *Welsh AM*, **John McDonnell MP**, **Michael Connarty MP**, **Kate Hudson** *General Secretary, CND*, **Lindsey German** *Convenor, Stop the War Coalition*, **Salma Yaqoob**, **Andy De La Tour**, **Victoria Brittain**, **Billy Hayes**, *General secretary, CWU*, **Mick Whelan** *General secretary, Aslef*, **Doug Nicholls** *General secretary, General Federation of Trade Unions*, **Ronnie Draper** *General Secretary, BFAWU*, **Roger McKenzie** *Assistant general secretary, Unison*, **Professor Peter Hallward** *Kingston University*, **Dr Francisco Dominguez**, *Head, Centre for Latin American Studies, Middlesex University & over 100 more people from across British civil society.*