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April 12, 2017

To: Local Union Presidents and Recording Secretaries

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Re: National Day of Mourning

April 28, the National Day of Mourning, is the most somber day of the year for workers and the labour movement. On this day, the labour movement takes a pause to give thought to all workers who suffer from injury or employment-related illness, and grief is shared for those who lost their lives on the job. In reflecting on the events of the past year, our vow must be to mobilize, lobby and educate to avoid any future tragedy.

In 2015, the most recent numbers available, 852 workers in Canada died at work leaving devastated families, friends, co-workers and communities behind from coast to coast to coast. Sadly, 852 lost lives is not an anomaly; in fact it's typical. On average more than 900 workers have died each and every year for the past quarter century. This is not acceptable. More must be done.

Canada needs to get tougher on mandating safe workplace environments and our union must speak out to draw attention to this important issue.

It was 25 years ago this year when 26 miners lost their lives in the Nova Scotia's Westray mine disaster. The theme for the 2017 Day of Mourning is "*Remember Westray. Enforce the law.*" Unifor joins unions across Canada to demand that government hold corporations, directors, and managers, accountable in every way, including criminally, should they fail to protect the safety of their employees.

Together we can and do make a difference.

On the last National Day of Mourning, Canadian unions demanded a national ban on asbestos, which was later announced by the federal government in December of 2016. Unifor will continue to fight for immediate implementation of the ban to forever eliminate this deadly substance from our country.

This year, I ask that you carry the message of workplace safety and workers' rights beyond the Day of Mourning and forward with you on each and every day.

In solidarity,



Jerry Dias
National President



Sari Sairanen
Director, Health, Safety and Environment

JD:SS:lhcope343

cc. NEB, National Representatives, Coordinators