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To Melanie Strickland and All the Stansted 15

OVERTURN THE VERDICT

Dear Friends

It was with anger and disbelief that we received the news yesterday about the guilty verdict in your trial. We send the utmost Solidarity from all our trade union delegates and, we are sure, their branches will join in once the information gets out.

It will be a very distressing time for you all – a situation that you don't deserve for the brave actions that you took for simple humanitarian reasons. However, please be assured, we are determined to do all we can to get these unjust charges overturned.

It is true that in today's climate of 10 years austerity the rich and powerful want to keep the rest of us silent and intimidated. This Tory government has introduced more draconian legal restrictions on trade unions, the worst in Western Europe, aiming to stop workers fighting for better pay and conditions. We have seen the law used against people trying to stop trees being chopped down on the highways in Sheffield because the private contractor estimated they were too expensive to maintain. The anti-fracking lads were initially jailed for just protesting on the top of lorries. And now we have your case. This cannot go on.

The real criminals are those who cause tragedies like Grenfell; who devise a welfare system (Universal Credit) that sends people to food banks; who get away with paying slave wages to young people; and who are allowed to charge sky-rocket rents that put poor workers on the streets.

And judges are tied by a million threads to those at the top. It's time for a change.

We will do all we can to get this verdict overturned and stop you all going to prison.

Solidarity

Linda Taaffe (Secretary)