



**CoDevelopment Canada**  
260-2747 E Hastings St. Vancouver BC  
V5K 1Z8 T 604.708.1495 F 604.708.1497  
E [codev@codev.org](mailto:codev@codev.org) [www.codev.org](http://www.codev.org)

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Hello CoDev Supporters,

The Canada Colombia Free Trade Agreement (CCFTA) is currently at the Standing Committee on International Trade - and the Committee is hearing witness testimony on the human rights amendment proposed by MP Scott Brison. Yesterday CoDev Executive Director, Barbara Wood, along with Carleen Pickard of the Council of Canadians presented their testimony. They spoke to human rights and democracy concerns in Colombia and both spoke from direct experience in the country.

After listening to Barbara Wood's [compelling testimony](#) (audio version at [11m30s](#)) which relayed human rights concerns in Colombia to the Committee, Liberal MP (Kings -Hants) and Trade Critic Scott Brison responded with an [unwarranted attack](#) on her in an attempt to discredit her and her testimony.

His response ([starts 21m45s in audio clip](#)) speaks for itself:

*Following excerpt from CIIT unedited evidence:*

*Hon. Scott Brison (Kings-Hants, Lib.):* Thank you, Ms. Wood. You stated that the human rights amendment and the binding agreement that will be signed by the Canadian government and the Colombian government requires only that Colombia writes reports on their own human rights. Is that what you believe to be the fact?

*Ms. Barbara Wood:* I don't have full information on what that amendment includes, but I do understand that the Colombian government would be responsible for presenting reports on the human rights impacts of this trade deal in their country.

*Hon. Scott Brison:* No, no...okay. You're right, you do not have and you have not taken time to gain or ascertain the information that you probably ought to have. The fact is, the Canadian government will write a report on Colombian human rights. That report will draw on the NGO community, will draw on input from the civil society community. It will be reported to Parliament on an annual basis, and we can debate it at a trade committee or a human rights committee.

I appreciate the opportunity to communicate that, but you did present what is false as a fact. It troubles me because it reflects what I believe to be a bias you have. If in fact you were willing to provide half truths to support your ideological argument on something so easily determined, simply with a phone call to my office, then I wonder whether much of what you provided to our committee is based on rigid ideological aversion to trade, and how much of it is actually based on well researched fact? There is a certain responsibility for those who appear before our committee to bring us fact and not necessarily pure rhetoric.

Question to Ms. Pickard,

*Ms. Barbara Wood:* May I respond to that? You just made some fairly...may I respond, please?

*Hon. Scott Brison: No, I didn't ask for a response. I'm fine.*

*Public debate on the proposed human rights amendment can be [found in the official transcript](#) from Parliament. It does not describe in any detail how the reporting mechanism will work.*

### **Take Action**

1. **Please send a message** asking each of the following Liberal MPs in British Columbia (with a [copy to your MP](#)) to convey to Mr. Brison that his conduct was out-of-line and that he must act in a more respectful and responsible manner in Committee. This kind behavior diminishes the Committee's work, along with the serious concerns many Canadians and Colombians have with the proposed CCFTA.

Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre)	<a href="mailto:Fry.H@parl.gc.ca">Fry.H@parl.gc.ca</a>
Keith Martin (Esquimalt-Juan de Fuca)	<a href="mailto:Martin.K@parl.gc.ca">Martin.K@parl.gc.ca</a>
Sukh Dhaliwal (Newton-North Delta)	<a href="mailto:Dhaliwal.S@parl.gc.ca">Dhaliwal.S@parl.gc.ca</a>
Ujjal Dosanjh (Vancouver South)	<a href="mailto:Dosanjh.U@parl.gc.ca">Dosanjh.U@parl.gc.ca</a>
Joyce Murray (Vancouver Quadra)	<a href="mailto:Murray1@parl.gc.ca">Murray1@parl.gc.ca</a>

2. All of this is particularly important within the current **context of threats** that one of our partners in Colombia is currently faced with. Please [click here](#) to take action and show support for the work of **NOMADESC and Berenice Celeyta**.
3. We also encourage each of you, if you haven't already, to sign on to the [Council of Canadians action alert](#) to ensure that the CIIT hearings continue until all witnesses are heard.

### **Additional Information**

- [Click here](#) for access to the full audio recording of the session. A full written transcript of the proceedings of this session of the Committee will be available [here](#) shortly.
- For a re-cap of where the Committee is at on the outstanding independent Human Rights Impact Assessment and the proposed human rights amendment go to the [Council of Canadian's website](#).

*Thank you for your continued support of the work of CoDevelopment Canada and our partners.*