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Hon. John Baird
Minister of Foreign Affairs
418-N Centre Block, House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
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June 27, 2014

Dear Minister Baird,

As you will be aware, Alexander Sodiqov, a Tajik citizen studying in Canada at the University of Toronto since 2012, was arrested on June 16 in Khorog, Tajikistan. Mr. Sodiqov was conducting interviews with Tajik civil society and public officials as part of an internationally-funded research project. Media reports suggest that Mr. Sodiqov has been charged with serious crimes, but details are unclear and his whereabouts are unknown.

Independent observers including Human Rights Watch, Freedom House, Reporters without Borders, and international academics have expressed concern about the secrecy surrounding Mr. Sodiqov's detention, as well as the alleged use of state media to broadcast edited excerpts of his interrogations in apparent attempts to discredit political opponents.

Mr. Sodiqov has a young daughter who is a Canadian citizen. What steps is the Government of Canada taking to ensure that this young Canadian girl's father is safe? Can you please confirm whether the Government of Canada has engaged directly with the Tajik authorities on this case?

Thank you in advance for your response,

Paul Dewar, M.P.



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