



**Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers**  
Association canadienne des avocats et avocates en droit des réfugiés

**BY EMAIL**

25 July 2016

Hon. Ralph Goodale, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness  
House of Commons  
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

**RE: Situation of immigration detainees in Lindsay, Ontario**

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Dear Minister Goodale,

Both the BC Civil Liberties Association and the Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers appreciated having the opportunity to meet with you to discuss immigration detention and other issues, and generally applaud the government for its efforts to consult with civil society.

We have seen a recent Canadian Press story and your Huffington Post op-ed about the detention situation in Lindsay and the hunger strike of detainees, in which our organizations are mentioned. We know that the government is deeply concerned with the issue of immigration detention. In recent weeks you have personally stated in the media that there must be dramatic improvements and that housing immigration detainees with criminals is inappropriate, and you have stated your government's desire for change to immigration detention in your op-ed. Minister McCallum has publicly commented that long-term detention is inappropriate. We welcome the government's openness to discussing these and other critical issues. We understand that the issues are complex and we reiterate our willingness to meet with you to discuss solutions to these issues.

We believe that the very urgent situation of the hunger strike and the serious long-term and publicly-documented issues with immigration detention at Lindsay and other immigration detention facilities – both federally and provincially run – call for the

government's immediate and sustained attention. We know that the government is considering reform and that you have stated that the government will announce changes in the near future. These issues include the use of long-term and indefinite detention, and the use of solitary confinement (segregation) to deal with detainees. In addition, at Lindsay, we understand detainees are frequently held in lockdown, that the temperature is at times inhumanely cold, that there are inadequate activities, limited opportunities for community and family interaction, inadequate access to counsel, abusive treatment of detainees, and inadequate access to health and mental health services. These practices at Lindsay and elsewhere in the country represent a significant and ongoing violation of the fundamental human rights of immigration detainees under Canadian and international law.

We ask that the government give the request for a meeting with detainees strong consideration. Understanding the situation of people directly affected by government policy is critical to crafting an appropriate response.

We thank you for your time, and look forward to future opportunities to discuss these and other matters with your office, and the government.

Sincerely,



Josh Paterson  
Executive Director  
BC Civil Liberties Association



Lobat Sadrehashemi  
Vice-President  
Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers  
(for Mitchell Goldberg, President, CARL)