

February 28, 2018

Delivered via: Email, Postal Service

The Honourable Ahmed Hussen, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada

365 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1L1
Canada

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Hon. Ahmed Hussen, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
365 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1L1

Dear Minister Hussen,

The Federation of Black Canadians (FBC FCN) is writing you to request a meeting at your earliest convenience to discuss current federal deportation and removal policies, particularly as they affect Black children under government care.

Since December 2016, Federation of Black Canadians has been in consultation with a variety of stakeholders, subject matter experts and community organizers across Canada to discuss the complexities of deportation policies in this country. Community members have expressed grave concerns about the ways in which those policies violate human rights, perpetuate anti-Black racism and even target vulnerable members of our communities, including Abdoul Abdi. The emerging consensus is that these cases among many others test Canada's expressed commitment to seeing the rule of law enacted with equity and compassion in this delicate area of immigration law and policy.

Various organizations and community organizers across the country have spoken out against Mr. Abdi's potential removal due to the devastating impact it would have on the claimant and his family, as well as his extenuating circumstances. As you are aware, immigrant children were barred from applying for Canadian citizenship until last year, which demonstrates your government's efforts to establish a more humane immigration system.

Unfortunately, Mr. Abdi arrived in Canada in 2000 and was put into youth protection; he therefore was unable to apply for residency and his citizenship paperwork was never filed. In January, he completed a five year sentence stemming from multiple convictions. Lacking Canadian citizenship, he now faces the looming prospect of deportation to war-ravaged Somalia, a country with which he has very tenuous ties, and with which he has had no contact since his departure, as a child nearly twenty years ago.

Having forcibly assumed the responsibility of raising him, the Crown should now consider the repercussions of its own potential negligence in this area, as it continues removal proceedings against Mr. Abdi. Mr. Abdi is but one example of the urgent need, signaled by Black communities, to address the nexus of immigration policy in child welfare, incarceration and anti-Black racism in Canada. This needs to be done with a Charter-informed culturally competent, compassionate and national lens.

As the Minister responsible for the Citizenship Act and the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA), FBC FCN would be pleased to work with you and community partners to explore ways to ensure that the implementation and development of deportation and removal policies reaffirm the principle of equity and Canada's humanitarian tradition while protecting the safety and security of all Canadians.

We thank you for your attention and looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely yours,



Richard Picart
Communications Lead (Toronto)
obo - Steering Committee of the Federation of Black Canadians
communications@fbcfcn.ca
647 360 0641 x.101

cc:

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada
The Honourable Ralph Goodale, Minister of Public Safety & Emergency Preparedness
The Honourable Andrew Scheer, Leader of the Opposition
Mr. Jagmeet Singh, Leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada