

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION



CHEF DE L'OPPOSITION

For immediate release  
August 13, 2009

## Just the Facts:

### Conservative mishandling of Suaad Hagi Mohamud's case

Today Prime Minister Harper claimed that getting Ms. Mohamud on a flight home was the government's "first priority." But the facts show that Canadians cannot count on the Harper government to protect them while travelling abroad; in fact, Canadian officials gave Ms. Mohamud's passport to Kenyan immigration officials for the purposes of prosecuting her.

Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon, Public Safety Minister Peter Van Loan and Parliamentary Secretary Deepak Obhrai have been unresponsive for over two months while Ms. Mohamud was detained in a Kenyan jail after Canadian officials gave her passport to Kenyan immigration officials, facilitating her prosecution and imprisonment.

The facts:

#### **Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon refused to help validate her Canadian citizenship:**

"The individual has to be straightforward, has to let us know whether or not she is a Canadian citizen. She's saying so, but there is no tangible proof to the effect. All Canadians who hold passports generally have a picture that is identical in their passport to what they claim to be." (*CBC News: The National, July 24, 2009*)

Two weeks ago, Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon said Mohamud must **try harder** to prove herself: "The individual Canadian citizen has to let us know whether or not she is a Canadian." (*Toronto Star, Aug 11 2009*)

#### **The Conservative government was confused on who would handle Ms. Mohamud's file:**

"Federal officials are leaving Mohamud in diplomatic limbo, unwilling to get to the bottom of the potential confusion around her identity, he charged yesterday.

Yesterday, there was confusion in the government ranks over what department was handling the issue. Staff for Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon referred questions to Public Safety Minister Peter Van Loan. A spokeswoman for Cannon said she had "nothing to add" even though the department had said little previously.

By the end of the day, Van Loan's staff was referring queries back to Cannon's office." (*Toronto Star July 21 2009*)

**Numerous written and verbal requests to Conservative ministers from Ms. Mohamud's Member of Parliament, Liberal MP Joe Volpe, went unanswered, including:**

**June 12, 2009** – Mr. Volpe expressed his concern about Ms. Mohamud's case to both Parliamentary Secretary Deepak Obhrai and to Minister Cannon.

**June 18, 2009** – Mr. Volpe sent letters to Minister Cannon, Mr. Obhrai and the Canadian High Commission requesting answers on file.

**July 23, 2009** – Urgent request from Mr. Volpe for phone call with Minister Van Loan to discuss trial and possible imprisonment or deportation of Ms. Mohamud.

**July 24, 2009** – Mr. Volpe faxed a letter to Minister Van Loan inquiring about the status of Ms. Mohamud's case.

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