



RECOGNIZE CELIL

This an open letter from concerned human rights advocates, lawyers and other professionals across Canada in regards to the case of Huseyin Celil.



Honourable Justin Trudeau
Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada

Honourable Erin O'Toole
Leader of the Conservative Party of Canada

Mr. Jagmeet Singh
Leader of the New Democratic Party

Mr. Yves-François Blanchet
Leader of the Bloc Quebecois

Mrs. Annamie Paul
Leader of the Green Party

We support Canada's condemnation of China's conviction and sentencing of Michael Spavor, China's decision to uphold the death penalty sentence against Robert Schellenberg, and the continued arbitrary detention of Michael Kovrig. Canada has remained steadfast in bringing an end to the horrific ordeal of these Canadians.

However, we are gravely concerned about Canada's foreign policy and its choice to prioritize some Canadians over others. Canada has been actively building a coalition in support of the two Michaels but has left Huseyin Celil behind. We are very disturbed to see him being treated as a second-class citizen and deprived of his rights.

Let us be clear, Huseyin Celil is a Canadian citizen. He is also a proud Uyghur and a community leader who has advocated for religious and political rights for his community. After fleeing China because of persecution, Huseyin became a refugee, settled with his family in Canada in 2001 and gained Canadian citizenship.

In March 2006, Huseyin and his family traveled on their Canadian passports to Uzbekistan to visit family. This was the last time Huseyin's wife, Kamila and their boys would see Huseyin. He was arrested by Uzbeki police on behalf of China and extradited to China where he has been detained for over 15 years.



Canada had 6 weeks to prevent Huseyin's transfer to China but instead did nothing. His only crime is being Uyghur. Huseyin turned 52 years-old last March. To date, his whereabouts and well-being are unknown.

China has violated many of Huseyin's human rights including:

- no access to a lawyer, his family, or Canadian officials during his trial,
- allegations of torture and forced confessions,
- denied recognition of his Canadian citizenship,
- solitary confinement,
- subjected to a re-education program, and
- denied his freedom of belief, thought, expression, and religion.

China is a signatory on the *Vienna Convention On Consular Relations* in 1979. It also signed the *Consular Agreement Between The Government Of Canada and The Government Of The People's Republic Of China* in 1999. China is in breach of both agreements.

Huseyin is a Canadian citizen yet continues to be denied the right to consular services. The Canadian government cannot even tell his family if he is alive.

The Subcommittee of Foreign Affairs and International Development and Subcommittee on International Human Rights have echoed in their March 2021 report titled '[Human Rights Situation of the Uyghurs in Xinjiang, China](#)' the demand of many people throughout the 15 years of Huseyin's detention in China which recommends "Global Affairs Canada use all the tools at its disposal to secure the release of Huseyin Celil, including but not limited to the appointment of a special envoy specifically tasked with seeking his release and return." Canada must act on this case. If Canada is not recognizing him in its own discourse how can we expect China to free Celil.

We demand the Canadian government to RECOGNIZE CELIL.

We call on all political parties to:

- Recognize that Huseyin Celil is a Canadian citizen
- Reaffirm the commitment of reuniting Huseyin Celil with his family as part of your foreign affairs promises in your election platform
- Call for China to provide Canada consular access to Huseyin Celil
- Commit to appointing a special envoy to seek Huseyin Celil's release and return.



For more information on Huseyin Celil, please visit: www.recognizecelil.com

Signatories,

Organizations

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Justice for All Canada

URAP (Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project)

Stop Uyghur Genocide Canada

Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at Mississauga

Bosnian Islamic Centre

Bosnian Islamic Centre of Hamilton

Canadian Multi Faith Initiative for Uyghur Rights

Canadian Sufi Cultural Centre

Canadians in Support of Refugees in Dire Need

Canadians United Against Hate

Downtown Muslim Professional Network

JEIM

Masjid al-Farooq Islamic Centre

The Ottawa Muslim Women's Organization

Think for Actions

Uyghur Mosque

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**RECOGNIZE
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