



January 16, 2007

The Honorable Stockwell Day
Minister of Public Safety
Ottawa, Canada K1A 0P8

Dear Minister Day:

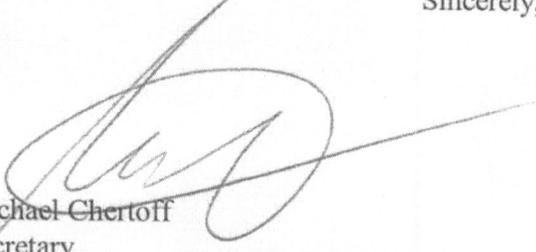
This letter is in response to your inquiries to us regarding the status of U.S. records for Maher Arar. We hope that you find the information provided below responsive to your concerns.

As a matter of policy, the United States generally does not discuss whether an individual is, or is not, on a U.S. border control "watch list." Following Justice O'Connor's report regarding Mr. Arar, however, U.S. Ambassador Wilkins issued a statement on December 15, 2006, that Mr. Arar is on a U.S. watch list, and that his original removal from the United States was based on information from a variety of sources, as is his current watch list status. Several days later, State Department spokesperson Sean McCormack stated that the decision to place and keep Mr. Arar on the watch list was a conscious one, and was taken for a good reason. Finally, at a press conference with Foreign Minister MacKay on December 21, 2006, Secretary Rice stated that she had asked the Department of Homeland Security and the Justice Department to examine the watch listing of Mr. Arar, so that we can share anything further.

In response to the concerns raised by you and others in the Canadian Government, and in accordance with Secretary Rice's discussions with Foreign Minister MacKay, our Departments, in conjunction with the Intelligence Community, have reexamined the materials in the possession of the United States regarding Mr. Arar. Based on this reexamination, we remain of the view that the continued watch listing of Mr. Arar is appropriate. Our conclusion in this regard is supported by information developed by U.S. law enforcement agencies that is independent of that provided to us by Canada regarding Mr. Arar. We want to ensure that this U.S.-derived information has been shared with Canada, and that both countries have an accurate understanding of the facts. To this end, we welcome the opportunity to participate in a confidential meeting with appropriate Canadian officials at their earliest convenience.

As you know, we highly value our law enforcement relationship with Canada. We are grateful for Canada's cooperation in fighting terrorism, and we look forward to continuing to work with you on this and all other matters involving our Departments.

Sincerely,



Michael Chertoff
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security



Alberto R. Gonzales
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice