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Sent via e-mail

The Honourable Peter Van Loan
Minister of Public Safety
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Van Loan,

The Documentary Organization of Canada represents more than 800 documentary filmmakers including journalists, producers, crafts people and students across Canada.

We are writing to express our concerns over the questioning of the well known US journalist Amy Goodman at the Douglas border crossing in BC, on November 25th.

DOC members depend on free and open travel to other countries to bring back stories of interest to the Canadian public. Detaining Ms. Goodman at the border, examining her computers and materials, and questioning her on the subject of her lecture to the Vancouver public library is both oppressive and chilling. It also provides foreign governments with an excuse to disregard Canada when we object to restrictions on the free travel of journalists in other parts of the world.

In addition, the particular cross examination of her views about the Olympics appear politically motivated. Surely this could not be a reason to delay and possibly deny access to someone. The fact that Ms. Goodman was evidently focusing on the merits of the Canadian health system is ironic. Instead of fostering free discussion, and the promotion of the Canadian medical model, this intervention serves to bring Canada into disrepute.

We urge you to address this issue on behalf of the government, and to make it clear that Canada supports the free discussion of diverse viewpoints, and the free travel of journalists across borders. We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

John Christou
Co-Chair

Tina Hahn
Co-Chair

cc Mr. Don Davies – NDP Public Safety Critic
Mr. Brian Masse – NDP Border Critic
Mr. Mark Holland – Liberal Security Critic