

RELEASE IN PART B6

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, September 8, 2010 9:45 AM
To: H
Cc: Sullivan, Jacob J; Abedin, Huma
Subject: FW: Updated response to Howard Dean

FYI – interesting.

Not sure if you have the background on this but happy to give.

cdm

From: deanhowardb [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, September 08, 2010 9:44 AM
To: Mills, Cheryl D
Subject: Re: Updated response to Howard Dean

B6

Cheryl, many many thanks. We have high hopes now that you and the Secretary are directly involved. Warmly,
Howard

Sent from my Verizon Wireless BlackBerry

From: "Mills, Cheryl D" <MillsCD@state.gov>
Date: Wed, 8 Sep 2010 09:41:08 -0400
To: <deanhowardb [redacted]>
Cc: Toiv, Nora F <ToivNF@state.gov>
Subject: FW: Updated response to Howard Dean

Howard-

Thank you again for your inquiry. Here is a background from our Consular Affairs Office on where this currently stands.

The Office of Children's Issues here at State began working with Mr. Bower in August 2009 when his sons were abducted by their mother to Egypt notwithstanding a court order from a family court in Massachusetts that had given the father sole custody of the children. Since then, as you know, Mr. Bower has not been able to see his children.

On August 31, 2010, Embassy Cairo conducted a welfare visit (the first) with the Bower boys at the Ministry of Justice. The Government of Egypt played a constructive role in arranging this consular visit. As you may know, Senator Kerry has been following this case closely and issued a statement after the visit:

“I applaud the Egyptian government’s facilitation of American consular access today in Cairo for Noor and Ramsey. I hope that this is a first step that can lead to a positive outcome. It is past time for the children to be returned to Massachusetts where they belong. The facts are clear: the two boys were taken illegally to Egypt by their mother more than a year ago in blatant contravention of a U.S. court ruling that granted their father, Colin Bower, sole custody. I have conveyed my concerns over this

matter to the State Department and hope that the involvement of the U.S. government will help bring this tragedy to its rightful conclusion by reunited these boys with their father.”

The Department and US Embassy's Executive Office have raised this case with high level Egyptian officials many times.

They are actively pushing the Egyptian Government to help resolve this. Unfortunately, Egypt is not a member of the Hague Convention on abductions, so left behind parents must depend on the local courts to do the right thing. In 2000, Egypt has formed a "Good Intentions Subcommittee" to help mediate between parents. There have been some good results, although it all depends on the willingness of parents to work together. We also have an MOU with the Egyptian Government that allows for consular access. Embassy Cairo relied on the MOU when they approached the Egyptian Good Intentions Sub-Committee for help in scheduling a welfare visit with the Bower children. Without the intervention of that sub-committee, it's likely the Embassy would not have been able to conduct the August 31 welfare visit with the children.

Our folks will continue working closely with Mr. Bower, our Embassy in Cairo, and with the Government of Egypt to help find a solution that reunites Mr. Bower with his children.

Best.

cdm