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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6275

KOLAN L. DAVIS, Chief Counsel and Staff Director
JENNIFER DUCK, Democratic Chief Counsel and Staff Director

September 5, 2018

The Honorable Mike Pompeo
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

In anticipation of your upcoming visit to India in September for the “2+2” Dialogue, we respectfully urge you to discuss with your counterparts a resolution of the over 80 international parental child abduction (“IPCA”) cases that were open at the conclusion of 2017. U.S.-India relations are vital to our mutual economic and national security interests, and we applaud and encourage all opportunities to strengthen our relationship with the world’s most populous democracy. However, in the context of a healthy dialogue with India, we believe the time has come for India to be a more reliable partner in the resolution of these child abduction cases.

As you know, the Department of State’s (“State Department”) Annual Report on International Child Abduction for 2018 made clear that “India does not adhere to any protocols with respect to international parental child abduction... [and] demonstrated a pattern of noncompliance.”¹ The Report goes on to say “competent authorities in India persistently failed to work with the Department of State to resolve abduction cases.”² To date, 90% of requests for the return of abducted children remained unsolved for over one year.³ In light of these troublesome numbers, we ask, on behalf of the many parents here in the United States who lack any communication with their children in India, if you would consider the following proposals to solve this problem.

First, we ask you to initiate a bilateral treaty or memorandum of understanding with India to resolve the abduction cases of more than 100 children illegally retained in India. Second, we ask you to urge India to set up procedures immediately that would give left-behind parents access to their children in the interim, until the children are returned.

¹ See Department of State, *Report on Compliance with the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction*, April 2018, available at <https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/NEWIPCAAssets/pdfs/AnnualReports/2018%20Annual%20Report%20on%20International%20Child%20Abduction%20FINAL1.pdf> [hereinafter “State”].

² *Id.*

³ *See id.*

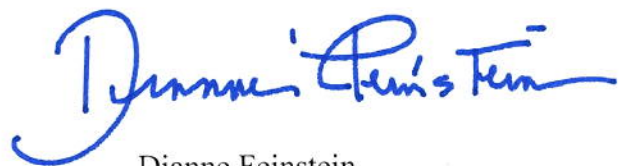
We believe these requests are in line with the responsibilities the Secretary of State is entrusted with under the Sean and David Goldman International Child Abduction Prevention and Return Act of 2014 (“Goldman Act”).⁴

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Aakash Singh or Katherine Nikas of the Committee’s Majority staff at (202) 224-5225. Similarly, please feel free to contact Jennifer Piatt or Katharine Clark of the Committee’s Minority staff at (202) 224-7703.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Senate Committee on the Judiciary



Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on the Judiciary

⁴ See §§ 103, 202 of the Sean and David Goldman International Child Abduction Prevention and Return Act of 2014, *available at* Pub. L. 133-150.