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November 18, 2015

Via email: Minister@cic.gc.ca

The Honourable John McCallum, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
Citizenship and Immigration
365 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, ON K1A 1L1

Dear Minister:

On behalf of the Immigration Law Section of the Canadian Bar Association (CBA Section), I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship. We look forward to working with you and your department.

I will be in Ottawa with other officers of the CBA Section on November 26 and 27, 2015. We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you briefly on one of those days to consider these important issues with a view to ongoing cooperation.

The CBA is a national association representing over 36,000 jurists, including lawyers, notaries, law teachers and students across Canada. Our primary objectives include improvements in the law and the administration of justice. The CBA Section has members across Canada practising in all areas of immigration and refugee law and dedicated to the evolution of a fair and efficient system reflecting the principles of natural justice and Canadian interests.

Recent years have seen sweeping changes to Canada's immigration system, many of which have raised serious concerns for our members and the people we represent. We believe there is now a significant opportunity to improve a system that is vital to Canada.

We are pleased that your government has committed to address many issues of mutual concern, including processing delays, challenges with family reunification and facilitating the immigration of entrepreneurs. We are looking forward to working with you and your officials to convey the perspective of the legal profession. We wish to bring to your attention the CBA Section's specific priorities:

1. Returning to a structured, principled and transparent approach to determining the priorities for Canada's immigration system, including family reunification and global competitiveness;

2. Respecting the rule of law and principles of natural justice, particularly in the determination and cessation of refugee status, revocation of Canadian citizenship and granting conditional permanent residence;
3. Balancing changes in legislation and process with available resources to ensure public access and due process for applications, reducing both the need for litigation and damage to Canada's international reputation;
4. Creating opportunities for those economic immigrants inappropriately disadvantaged by current programs, including international students, academics, artists and key business personnel;
5. Balancing program integrity with desired outcomes and establishing reasonable and proportionate compliance mechanisms; and
6. Defining the appropriate role for CBSA with respect to processing immigration applications and enforcing outcomes, and providing oversight of its role.

Would you kindly respond to indicate whether you would be available for a brief meeting with us on November 26 or 27?

Yours truly,

(original letter signed by Eugene Oscapella for Stéphane Duval)

Stéphane Duval
Chair, CBA Immigration Law Section