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## **URAP Announces Its Withdrawal from the Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference**

January 31, 2024

URAP announces its formal decision to withdraw from the Public Inquiry into Foreign Interference in Federal Electoral Processes and Democratic Institutions, led by Commissioner Marie-Josée Hogue, effective January 31, 2024.

This decision follows extensive internal deliberation and discussions, as well as public expressions of concern by URAP in the media.

URAP has conveyed its disappointment regarding Commissioner Hogue's decision to grant full standing to MP Han Dong (a former Liberal MP) and Markham's deputy mayor Michael Chan, along with intervener status to Senator Yuen Pau Woo. These statuses provide access to highly confidential information, potentially jeopardizing our community and others, and allowing them to cross-examine witnesses.

There are strong, credible allegations against these three individuals for their association with the Chinese Communist Party and its interference into Canadian politics. The Canadian Security Intelligence Service has substantiated the claims against MP Dong and Mr. Chan. These allegations pose a significant security risk to Canada, and specifically to diaspora communities affected by transnational repression that are participating in the inquiry.

URAP refuses to participate in a process meant to address and reconcile foreign interference - that uplifts individuals complicit in and benefiting from foreign interference themselves. The Commission's protection of questionable national actors and its simultaneous failure to safeguard victims of transnational repression reveals systemic dysfunctionality in its process. This failure is incongruous with the Commission's proposed mission and Canadian values of democracy, transparency and rule of law.

URAP wholeheartedly supports the public inquiry's core mission, given URAP Executive Director Mehmet Tohti's relentless victimization, intimidation and harassment by Chinese officials for his advocacy for the Uyghur community. It is disheartening that the Commissioner has failed to protect individuals like Mehmet and other diaspora community members personally invested in the public inquiry's subject matter.

URAP urges the Canadian public to recognize the reality and pervasiveness of foreign interference in the lives of fellow Canadians and our democratic processes. Additionally, we call on MP Han Dong, Mr. Chan, and Sen. Yuen Pau Woo to resign from their posts and renounce their statuses in the public inquiry. The fate of Canadian national security and democracy hangs in the balance.

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