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May 13, 2016

Her Excellency, Erna Solberg
Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway
Office of the Prime Minister
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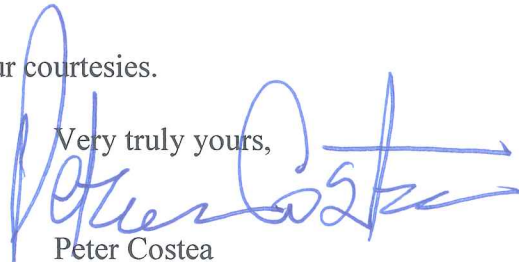
Re.: International Attorney Petition for the Release of the Bodnariu Children
In the Matter of Marius and Ruth Bodnariu and their Five (5) Children

Your Excellency:

Greetings! I am attaching an International Attorney Petition for the Release of the Bodnariu Children. It has been signed by over 100 attorneys from the United States and abroad, as well as by a number of members of the European Parliament. It is addressed to Your Excellency as the Prime Minister of Norway. We ask that your Office kindly acknowledge receipt of our Petition.

Thank you for your courtesies.

Very truly yours,



Peter Costea

pc/my
encl.

INTERNATIONAL PETITION FOR THE RELEASE OF THE BODNARIU CHILDREN

Her Excellency, Erna Solberg
Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway
Office of the Prime Minister
Postboks 8001 Dep, 0030
Oslo, NORWAY
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Re.: International Petition in Support of the Marius and Ruth Bodnariu Family

Your Excellency:

We are attorneys from multiple countries and different continents concerned about the violations of the religious freedom and parental rights of the family of Marius and Ruth Bodnariu from Naustdal, Norway. The family's five (5) children were unlawfully seized by the Norwegian Child Protective Services (Barnevernet) on November 16 and 17, 2015 due to the family's sincerely held Christian beliefs. The children were between three (3) months and 9 years of age at that time.

We have familiarized ourselves with the facts of the matter and are deeply disturbed that the children's seizure was motivated by the family's Christian faith. Barnevernet's own documents attest to the fact that the family's faith and religious values were at the core of the officials' discussions when debating the children's seizure. Barnevernet disapproved of the parenting style of the parents because, it concluded, it was "based on the Bible."

We have also familiarized ourselves with the legal aspects of the matter, both as they relate to Norway's domestic legislation and international law. Norway's Child Welfare Act imposes an obligation on Norway's authorities to preserve the religious identity of the children it removes from their biological families. (Section 4-15 of the 1992 Child Welfare Act). That has not been done.

The Bodnariu children have been placed with foster homes. They no longer go to Church, are raised by individuals who do not share the Christian faith or the belief in God of the children or of their biological parents, and have no interest in or appreciation for Christian values. On the contrary, some of the foster parents have been dismissive and derisive of the children's religious feelings when the children attempted to pray or display religious inclinations.

This is a violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as well. Among others, Norway's Barnevernet has violated Article 8 of the Convention which imposes on States the obligation to "preserve [the child's] identity," as well as Article 14 which emphasizes that States "shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion."

We are also outraged by the extreme hardship which Barnevernet has inflicted upon the Bodnariu family. The children's seizure has resulted in the family being dismembered into four (4) parts, with the parents living in Naustdal and the five (5) children being dispersed in three different cities around Norway where they live with three (3) different foster families. The parents' meetings with the children are sporadic, occur whenever Barnevernet determines, in its exclusive discretion, that they be allowed, and, when the entire family reunites for one or two hours, it is subjected to unwarranted government supervision and monitoring. This violates Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights which stipulates that "everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life."

We find the facts of this international incident unacceptable not only on legal grounds but also on humanitarian and moral grounds. We view these transgressions as grievous breaches of domestic and international law. We are also cognizant of the severe mental pain and anguish which Barnevernet's unlawful actions have inflicted on the parents, but especially on the children. It will take a long time for their mental wounds to heal. Therefore, it is important that Norway immediately release the children back to their biological parents.

We were encouraged, however, to learn that in early April the youngest of the children was returned to the parents, but disheartened that the remaining children have not.

In closing, we respectfully ask you Madam Prime Minister to use your position and the avenues available to your Office to ensure that the youngest Bodnariu child permanently remains with his biological parents and the remaining four (4) Bodnariu children are immediately and permanently returned to their biological parents.

LIST OF SIGNATORIES

1. Peter Costea, JD, Ph D, Houston, Texas
2. Paul Susman, Attorney, Brussels
3. Michael Donnelly, HSLDA Attorney, Purcellville, Virginia
4. Michael P. Farris, JD, LLM, Chairman, Home School Legal Defense Association, Purcellville, Virginia
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6. The Honorable Titus Corlatean, Senator, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and former Minister of Justice of Romania
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42. Tomas Zdechovsky, Czech Republic (Member of the European Parliament)
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