

If you are arrested or detained abroad and you wish to have Canadian consular officials notified, you should clearly make that request to the arresting authorities. It is important to realize that the arresting authorities do not have an obligation to inform a Canadian diplomatic or consular mission of your arrest or detention unless you request this.

ii. Family or Friends in Canada

As a family member or a friend of a person detained abroad, you should contact the Consular Operations and Emergency Services Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, at (613) 996-4376 or 1-800-267-6788.

A consular official can provide you with general information about the country involved, prison conditions and the local justice system. You will not be given any details of the detention or arrest, or told how to establish communication with the person, unless the detainee has authorized it.

You should resist the urge to take immediate action such as visiting the detainee, or sending money or parcels. You should discuss such actions with a consular official in Ottawa, who will advise you on the feasibility of such initiatives and how best to proceed.

It is important to note that in many countries, mail sent or received by detainees will be opened and read by prison authorities. It is also not unusual for telephone conversations to be monitored. Care should be taken, therefore, not to discuss or put in writing anything that you would not wish to become public.