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June 2, 2009

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Mr. President,

My name is Olga Weisfeiler. I am the sister of the one U.S. citizen among more than 1100 disappeared in Chile, Professor Boris Weisfeiler. During the past couple of months, I, as well as Congressman Barney Frank, have repeatedly asked our top government officials to bring the issue of the investigation of my brother's disappearance to the attention of President of Chile Michelle Bachelet – all to no avail.

Despite number of recent meetings with President Bachelet, by Vice President Biden, Secretary Clinton, and yourself, Mr. President, not one of our top government officials can find a time to inquire about the case of my brother, a U.S. citizen disappeared at the hands of the Pinochet regime. Squandering multiple opportunities to make top Chilean officials aware of the concern of top U.S. officials of this major human rights case involving the fate of a U.S. citizen, is, in my opinion, a failure of foreign policy and not acceptable.

Congressman Frank has recently received a Department of State letter as a response to his April 15, 2009 letter to you, Mr. President. Rep. Frank urged you to convey to President Bachelet that your "Administration is and will remain strongly committed to pressing hard for final resolution" of the Weisfeiler case. The letter that Rep. Frank received is word-to-word identical to the letter I received a month earlier from the State Department in response to my March 12, 2009, letter to Secretary of State Clinton. I begged Secretary Clinton to intercede with the Chilean government of President Bachelet on behalf of my family and demand from the Chilean officials two very specific actions: an official permission for the FBI to investigate the Weisfeiler case and reclassification of the case as a human rights violation. As a reply to my pleas, I received a letter informing me of the U.S. embassy's efforts on the case of which I am already well aware. Sadly, neither of those State Department letters addressed the critical issues needed to find the one U.S. citizen among the 1100 disappeared Chileans from the Pinochet era.

The FBI has no legal authority in investigation of the case of this disappeared U.S. citizen despite the fact that the Legal Attaché was recently allowed by the local Judge to conduct a reenactment test. Nor has the Chilean government of President Bachelet ever requested FBI support for government agencies that could, and should, be involved in investigating of this crime. The goal of the U.S. government should be to obtain full participation of the FBI in an investigation of my brother's fate. While assessing the present situation, I believe that a full FBI investigation is my only hope to uncover the truth.

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The statement in the DOS letters that "this case remains a top human rights priority for the United States Government" seems meaningless. If the Weisfeiler case were really a top U.S. government priority, we would have some answers almost a quarter of century later after my brother, Boris, vanished. The resources of the U.S. would be devoted to finding out what happened to him and when. Moreover, certainly, if the case is a top priority, then Secretary of State Clinton, or Vice President Biden, or you, Mr. President, would address their concerns with President Bachelet in person.

The 2008 State Department's Annual Human Rights Report stated, "There were no developments in the 1985 disappearance case of U.S. citizen Boris Weisfeiler near Colonia Dignidad." This report says the same as that of last year, the year before that and all other previous reports; 25 years later, we know nothing more about my brother's fate than we knew in the 1980s.


To this day, I have not been able to find out what happened to Boris; I live in the dark about his fate; I still do not have my brother's body, or knowledge of the location of his grave. Indeed, I cannot even be sure if he is dead or alive. Some of the U.S. declassified documents suggested he was tortured and might have survived in captivity for a number of years. There is no confirmation of Boris' death.

As I noted above, Prof. Weisfeiler is the only U.S. citizen among 1100 Chileans who disappeared during the Pinochet dictatorship. The Chilean government designates all of them, with the exception of my brother, as human rights victims. Such misclassification of the Weisfeiler disappearance occurred because the Chilean Truth Commission did not have access to hundreds of classified U.S. State Department reports and cables on the Weisfeiler case; in 1990 the U.S. government did not share with the Commission these relevant records in its possession. Nor has the U.S. government ever pushed for a reevaluation of the case as a human rights crime: many documents clearly show that Chilean security forces were involved in my brother's disappearance.

Mr. President, I am pleading to you to do everything possible during your upcoming June meeting with President Bachelet to change the approach to the investigation of the Weisfeiler case. Just a few words from you could lead to the discovery of my brother's fate. I ask you, as someone who cares about human rights and who is my president, to put the Weisfeiler case on your agenda to discuss with President Bachelet. I am urging you to request from President Bachelet assistance in advancing the cause of FBI participation and reclassification of the Weisfeiler case as an acknowledged human rights violation; Chilean government's permission must be officially given to the FBI for a legal involvement in the investigation.

Thank you in advance for your attention.

Sincerely,



Olga Weisfeiler

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