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LEADER, NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY  
CHEF, NOUVEAU PARTI DÉMOCRATIQUE**

The Birtukan Society of Canada

December 20<sup>th</sup> 2009

Friends,

I would like to thank you for your invitation to take part in your celebration of the work and courage of Birtukan Midekisa.

Her imprisonment without charge is an affront to justice and is totally unacceptable. Paul Dewar, the NDP's Foreign Affairs critic, has been vocal in his support for her release and has called on Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon to pursue the matter with the Government of Ethiopia.

Ms. Midekisa's struggle as a prisoner of conscience and her commitment to the cause of democracy in Ethiopia, despite her unjust imprisonment, is a testament to her strength of spirit. Like many prisoners of conscience, her resolve has led others to take up her plight. I am sure that your efforts to bring attention to her cause will be successful and will shine a light on those who would see her rights denied.

I salute your dedication to her struggle and want to add my voice to the call for her immediate release.

Sincerely,

Jack Layton  
MP, Toronto-Danforth  
Leader, Canada's New Democrats

CC Paul Dewar, NDP Foreign Affairs Critic

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