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Politics

Han Dong says he's met with government, is waiting to learn if he can rejoin caucus

MP left the Liberal caucus after media story claimed he meddled in detentions of Kovrig and Spavor



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Han Dong celebrates with supporters in Toronto in 2014 during a rally in Toronto while he was a Liberal candidate. (Nathan Denette/The Canadian Press)

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Han Dong — the MP who left Liberal caucus to fight a claim that he meddled in the detentions of two Canadians — says he met with Public Safety Minister Dominic LeBlanc last week and is waiting to learn whether he'll be able to rejoin the Liberal caucus.

Dong said LeBlanc told him he would speak with the prime minister.

"I hope to rejoin the caucus as soon as possible," the Independent MP told CBC News.

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Dong, a Toronto-area MP, announced in late March he'd sit as an Independent after Global News published a report alleging he advised a senior Chinese diplomat in February 2021 that Beijing should hold off on freeing Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, the two Canadians being held by China at the time.

Former special rapporteur on foreign interference David Johnston investigated the claim and concluded in a report released in May that the allegation was "false."

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- [David Johnston says he never reached out to MP Han Dong before clearing him in foreign interference report](#)
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LeBlanc has said he is reviewing the situation internally. Earlier this month, he said he would make a recommendation at "the right moment."

The minister's office said it will have more to say in due time.

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Johnston's report also found that there were "irregularities" observed in Dong's nomination for the federal Liberals in 2019 and cited a "well-grounded suspicion that the irregularities were tied to the PRC consulate in Toronto, with whom Mr. Dong maintains relationships."

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But Johnston, who stepped down as rapporteur, wrote that he found no evidence that Dong knew about China's possible involvement in his nomination.

In April, Dong filed a \$15 million defamation lawsuit against Global News and its parent company, Corus Entertainment.

"I can't talk about the litigation because it's before the court, but what I can say is it's in the discovery phase and I look forward to clearing my name once and for all during the trial," Dong said recently.

In a statement issued in March, Global News said it "is governed by a rigorous set of journalistic principles and practices, and we are very mindful of the public interest and legal responsibility of this important accountability reporting."

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