

CANADIAN CIVIL LIBERTIES ASSOCIATION

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ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES LIBERTES CIVILES

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September 16, 2008

By mail and fax

The Honourable David Emerson
Minister of Foreign Affairs
125 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, ON, Canada
K1A 0G2

Fax: (613) 943-0219

Dear Mr. Emerson:

Re: Abousfian Abdelrazik

This is to express the concern of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association regarding the case of Abousfian Abdelrazik. Mr. Abdelrazik, who is a Canadian citizen, was reportedly arrested in Sudan in 2003 and imprisoned without charge for almost two years. While detained, Abdelrazik claims that he was beaten and tortured by Sudanese officials. He has since been released from custody in Sudan and is apparently living at the Canadian embassy in Khartoum. In spite of Mr. Abdelrazik's inclusion on at least one "no fly" list, he has reportedly found an airline willing to fly him to Canada. Presently, it appears that the only thing standing in the way of his return is the Canadian government's refusal to issue him the required travel documents.

It appears that Mr. Abdelrazik was initially imprisoned in Sudan as a result of suspected ties to international terrorism. To date, however, he has not been charged with any terrorism-related offences in either Canada or Sudan and there are indications that concerns about his links to terrorism have waned. Mr. Abdelrazik's inability to return to Canada has resulted in significant hardship for him and his family. His three children, who live in Montreal, have not seen their father in years, and he has effectively never met his youngest son, who is apparently now five years old. Mr. Abdelrazik himself is reportedly living in complete poverty and suffering from serious health problems.

At this point, it appears that the most significant obstacle to Mr. Abdelrazik's repatriation is a lack of political will on the part of the Canadian government. This situation demonstrates an unacceptable lack of regard for the well-being of both Mr. Abdelrazik and his family. In the absence of a demonstrated justification for an alternate course of action, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association urges the government to do whatever may be necessary to facilitate Mr. Abdelrazik's immediate return to Canada.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Graeme Norton
Director, Public Safety Project