

Abdelrazik asks opposition MPs to help him get off UN blacklist

By Juliet O'Neill, Canwest News Service
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OTTAWA — Abousfian Abdelrazik appealed to opposition MPs Wednesday to help him escape what his lawyer calls a "Kafkaesque nightmare" of being on a United Nations no-fly terrorist list.

His lawyers also asked MPs to press the federal government to strike down Canadian regulations that implement UN Security Council Resolution 1267, which established the blacklist process after the 9/11 attacks.

Once a person is listed, they can get stuck for years, they argued, pointing out that of the 504 people on the list, more than 40 are dead.

"I'm not aware of terrorist acts being committed by dead people," said lawyer and professor Amir Attaran.

Abdelrazik is a Sudanese-born Canadian who has launched a \$27 million lawsuit alleging the Harper government was directly responsible for his detention and torture in Sudan from 2003-09, when a Canadian court ordered his repatriation.

He was speaking Wednesday to a meeting of opposition members of the House of Commons foreign affairs committee.

As a result of being on the list, Abdelrazik said the Royal Bank of Canada has refused to reopen his account, he faces travel restrictions, cannot land a job and lives on the charity of people who could, by giving him money, be vulnerable to prosecution. Violation of the regulations carries a penalty of \$100,000 and up to 10 years in prison.

"The consequences are quite devastating on individuals," said lawyer Yavar Hameed.

Abdelrazik told of how his seven-year-old son recently asked if they could go to Disneyland — he had to explain that a trip to the U.S. would violate the regulations.

Attaran likened the list process to 17th-century witch trials.

"It's that far removed from contemporary justice," he said, adding there is no due process or chance for review.

The lawyers said there are no reasons given to the people who wind up on the list, and the Security Council committee that decides who is on and off the list is secretive.

Liberal MP Bob Rae questioned Abdelrazik about his life in an effort to see what could have caused his ordeal. Abdelrazik said he was a trade union member in Sudan before he came to Canada as a refugee, but he had never belonged to a political party or movement or religious sect.

The Montreal man said the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service was "intensively bothering" after 9/11, and one of the same CSIS officers who questioned him in Montreal also questioned him in Sudan when he returned to visit his sick mother in 2003.

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