

Bring Canadian home: protesters

RALLY: Man stuck in Sudan for six years

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It has been more than one year since Canadian citizen Abousfian Abdelrazik began living in the lobby of the Canadian embassy in Khartoum, Sudan.

It is time he come home, said a small group of protesters who gathered outside MP Daryl Kramp's office Monday.

Abdelrazik travelled to the Sudan in 2003 to visit his mother but, while there, he was imprisoned by Sudanese officials based on information received from the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS).

He was held until 2004 and released by officials there and received a full exoneration in Sudan. However, Abdelrazik could not fly home to Canada because his passport had expired and the United States has placed him on a "no-fly" list.

Since April 28, 2008, Abdelrazik has lived in the lobby of the embassy despite the fact more than 100 Canadians purchased him a plane ticket home after the government required he have a fully paid ticket instead of a confirmed reservation.

The day Abdelrazik was scheduled to fly out of Sudan, the Canadian government reneged on earlier promises and prevented him from taking the flight under what was known as a Passport Order.

With protests taking place across the country over the past number of days, it was Kramp's turn to have his office targeted. Approximately 10 people -- including a handful from Toronto -- stood outside the Sidney Street office carrying signs and handing out pamphlets.

"This is a Canadian citizen," Belleville's Mieke Thorne said. "He has been cleared by CSIS, he's been cleared by the RCMP so bring him home."

Thorne said people spent their own money to ensure Abdelrazik could return home last month only to have the government say he was not welcome back. She said the government has lied to Canada.

"It's a case of the government not being straight again. Why can't he come home? What's the problem?"

Longtime social and peace activist David Milne said citizens need to speak up and let the government know its actions with Abdelrazik are unacceptable. The man is a Canadian citizen and has rights, he said.