

# **Ticket bought for Abdelrazik, flight leaves on 3 April**

## **One hundred people call the government's bluff on Abousfian Abdelrazik**

Montreal, 12 March 2009 – Over one hundred people across the country have joined together to buy a plane ticket home for Abousfian Abdelrazik, even though the Canadian government has made it a federal offence to directly or indirectly finance or collect money to support Mr. Abdelrazik.

“This plane ticket strips away another excuse the government has used to prevent my client from returning home,” said Mr. Yavar Hameed, holding the ticket – purchased by 115 people - at a press conference in Montreal.

In December, the government stated in a letter to Mr. Abdelrazik's lawyer that he must present a fully-paid-for plane ticket before Passport Canada would agree to issue an emergency passport. Mr. Abdelrazik's passport expired while he was in prison in Sudan.

“He has the ticket. Now he needs the travel document. The flight leaves Khartoum on 3 April. An emergency passport can take less than 24-hours to issue. The government has three weeks,” stated Mr. Yavar Hameed, Mr. Abdelrazik's lawyer.

“Canada is responsible for Mr. Abdelrazik's detention and torture in Sudan,” stated Mr. Dominique Peschard, president of the Ligue des droits et libertés. “Rather than admitting its responsibility and correcting the situation, Canada has persisted in violating Mr. Abdelrazik's rights by denying his inalienable right to return to his country.”

Under federal law, anyone who dares to contribute money to purchase a ticket for Mr. Abdelrazik's return risks federal prosecution. The group of contributors to the ticket stretches from Vancouver to Halifax and reflects the groundswell of support for Mr. Abdelrazik and popular outrage and disgust at the government's criminal treatment of him. Contributors include well-known figures and regular people; farmers, law professors, labour union representatives, artists, film-makers, lawyers, workers, former Cabinet ministers, grandmothers, students and more. (See full list at [www.peoplescommission.org/abdelrazik.php](http://www.peoplescommission.org/abdelrazik.php).)

Internal government memos and other documents released under the Privacy Act reveal that, like Abdullah Almalki, Ahmad El Maati and Muayyed Nureddin – all imprisoned and tortured in Syria on the request of CSIS and the RCMP, as confirmed by the federal Iacobucci Inquiry - Mr. Abdelrazik was also jailed on the recommendation of CSIS, while on a visit to Sudan. In prison, he was beaten and tortured. In this horrific context, he was interrogated by CSIS officials complicit in his arrest. Released and cleared of all suspicion by Sudan, as well as the RCMP and CSIS, his many attempts to return home to Montreal have been blocked rather than aided by Canadian officials.

“Mr. Abdelrazik's ongoing torment, part of an illegal pattern of the Canadian government targeting its own residents for overseas detention, continues to this day, despite disingenuous assurances from officials in Ottawa that things have changed,” said Warren Allmand, former Solicitor-General of Canada and another donor. “Canada must end its extraordinary rendition program and stop putting up roadblocks to Mr. Abdelrazik's return,” added the Montreal-based human rights advocate.

“What we see here once again is the concrete impact of borders, both visible and invisible, on human beings,” stated Émilie Breton, a student affiliated with the Other Campaign (Otra Campagna) who contributed to the ticket. “While Canada continues to present itself as “open”, situations like this one show how the country feeds off the global system of apartheid.”

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**For more information about the donors and Project Fly Home: 514 222 0205**

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**Background: [www.peoplescommission.org/abdelrazik.php](http://www.peoplescommission.org/abdelrazik.php)**

**Source: Project Fly Home, [projectflyhome@gmail.com](mailto:projectflyhome@gmail.com)**