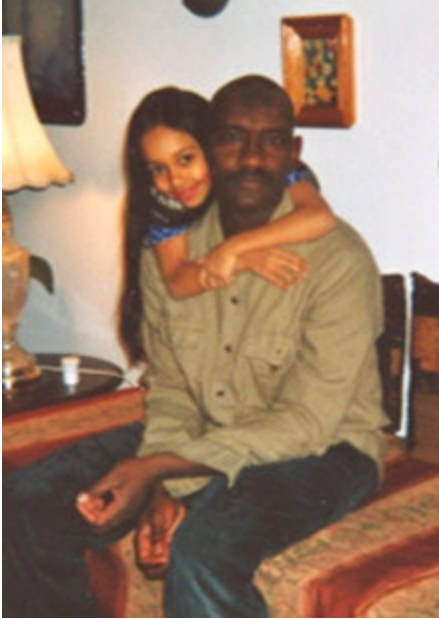


Support grows for Montreal man trapped in Sudan



Aousfian Abdelrazik in an undated photo. (CBC)

Support is growing for a Montreal man who has been trapped in Sudan for almost six years and has been living in the Canadian Embassy in Khartoum since last April.

Aousfian Abdelrazik was arrested originally as a terror suspect, but later cleared by Sudanese police.

Abdelrazik has been unable to return to Canada since he was cleared in 2006 because he has no passport, which expired while he was in detention, and because his name appears on a United Nations no-fly list.

"Help Aousfian Abdelrazik get a ticket home," is the title of a new page on the social network website Facebook, and Friday morning it was already showing 62 members.

Abdelrazik spent two of his years in Sudan in its notorious jails.

Documents obtained by his Ottawa lawyer, Yavar Hameed, suggest that Canadian Security Intelligence Service agents had him arrested and that even Sudan's secret police now believe Abdelrazik is innocent of any involvement with terrorists.

He remains on the UN list despite a request by Canada to have him removed. As long he remains on that list, it's illegal for anyone to help him financially.

A British Columbia student wants people to break that law and contribute money, and she's willing to set an example.

"I don't have dual citizenship [as Abdelrazik does, since he was born in Sudan]. I was born in Canada," said Serina Zapf, a political science student at the University of Victoria.

"It gives me the privilege to say, 'try and charge me.' I'm safe because of that position, because of the racial xenophobia that is happening in cases like this," she said.

Abdelrazik's lawyer, Hameed, welcomed the support. "The injustice of this situation really resonates with Canadians," he said.

But, Hameed said, he would have to turn down donations for his client's ticket, because, by accepting them, he too would be breaking the law.

Abdelrazik has a teenage daughter and older stepdaughter living in Montreal. A five-year-old son he has never met lives with his ex-wife in Ottawa.