



## Press release

**For immediate Release**

**Commissioner Dennis O'Connor releases the Fact Finder's report on  
Maher Arar's treatment in Jordan and Syria  
"I conclude that Maher Arar was subjected to torture in Syria"  
– Professor Stephen J. Toope, Fact Finder**

**Ottawa, October 27, 2005** – Mr Justice Dennis O'Connor, who heads the Commission of Inquiry into the actions of Canadian Officials in Relation to Maher Arar, made public today the 25-page report submitted to him by special Fact Finder Professor Stephen J. Toope.

### **Process**

Professor Toope's mandate was to investigate and report to the Commission on Mr. Arar's treatment during his detention in Jordan and Syria and its effects upon him and his family. In order to carry out his mandate, Professor Toope reviewed extensive written material including some *in camera* testimony and a selection of unredacted documents that were directly relevant to assessing Mr Arar's experience in Syria.

Professor Toope also interviewed ten people including Mr. Abdullah Almalki, Mr. Ahmad Abou-ELMaati and Muayyed Nureddin to hear their experiences in Syrian detention facilities and to compare their description with the description of Maher Arar. Finally, Professor Toope spent almost 10 hours in interviews with Maher Arar.

### **Findings**

The report provides a detailed account of the conditions of detention and the means of torture used at the Far Falestin (Palestine Branch) and at Sednaya prison where Mr. Arar was detained. Professor Toope then writes : "When I compare information available from public sources with the cross-referenced testimony of Messrs. Almalki, ELMaati, and Nureddin, I conclude that the stories they tell are credible. I believe that they suffered severe physical and psychological trauma while in detention in Syria. Mr. Almalki was especially badly treated, and for an extended period. When I compare all of this information to the story told to me by Mr. Arar, I am convinced that his description of his treatment in Syria is accurate." Moreover, cites the Report : "I conclude that the treatment of Mr. Arar in Far Falestin constituted torture as understood in international law. (...) in addition, the techniques of humiliation and the creation of intense fear were forms of psychological torture."

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To this day, Professor Toope reports, this experience has some lingering effects: “The effects of that experience, and of consequent events and experiences in Canada, have been profoundly negative for Mr. Arar and his family.”

“The Fact Finder’s report, with its detailed description of acts of torture makes for difficult reading but it is extremely important that it is now part of the record of this Inquiry” said Paul Cavalluzzo, Commission Lead Counsel.

The full report can be downloaded from the Commission’s Web site  
[www.ararcommission.ca/eng/17.htm](http://www.ararcommission.ca/eng/17.htm)

*Established under Part I of the Inquiries Act, the Arar Inquiry was set up on the recommendation of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness to investigate and report on the actions of Canadian officials in relation to Maher Arar. The Commissioner is also mandated to make recommendations that he considers advisable on an arm's length review mechanism for the activities of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police with respect to national security.*

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