



Press Release

For immediate release

The Arar Inquiry makes public DFAIT documents covering the detention of Maher Arar in the United States, Jordan and Syria

Ottawa, April 21, 2005 -- The Commission of Inquiry into the Actions of Canadian Officials in Relation to Maher Arar, headed by Mr. Justice Dennis O'Connor, is releasing today more than two thousand pages of documents that have been tabled as exhibits in the course of its *in camera* hearings.

The redacted – partially blacked out - documents deal with the actions of officials in the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) – as it was then called - in relation to Maher Arar. In the course of its ongoing *in camera* hearings, the Commission is receiving factual evidence, on which the government claims National Security Confidentiality (NSC) on DFAIT's role in connection with the case of M. Arar. Also, some portions of the documents have been redacted in order to respect the privacy of individuals and their families.

The documents being released today include the Foreign Affairs Canada (FAC) hearings documents deemed relevant by the Commission for its hearings; the FAC dossier on Maher Arar in New-York and Damascus, also called "Camant Notes"; a chronology of events with supporting documents dating back to the arrest of M. Arar in New-York in September 2002; and other public exhibits.

The Commission will not comment on the contents of the documents released today as they are part of the evidence before the Inquiry. These documents will be used at the Commission's public hearings that will be held in May and June.

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 RCMP with respect to national security.

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