



Press Release

For immediate release

Ruling on standing and funding at the Arar Inquiry

Ottawa, May 10, 2004 - Today, Mr. Justice Dennis R. O'Connor released his decision concerning the requests for standing presented to him in the course of public hearings held on the 29th and 30th of April last. In his ruling, Justice O'Connor granted full standing at the Inquiry to Maher Arar and the Attorney-General of Canada. Mr. Justice O'Connor has recommended funding for Mr. Arar's counsel. He also granted standing to the Ontario Provincial Police in so far as the evidence affects its interests.

In his ruling, Justice O'Connor indicated that it is likely that Mr. Ahmad Abou-ELMaati will be called as a witness and, to the extent that evidence relating to Mr. Arar also relates to him, he will be entitled to participate in the hearings. Justice O'Connor went on to say that it is not clear whether Mr. Youssef Almalki will have returned to Canada so as to be able to testify. Justice O'Connor directed that Mr. Almalki will be entitled to participate on the same basis as Mr. Abou-ELMaati. It is not anticipated at this point that Mr. Muayyed Nureddin will be called as a witness.

In his ruling, Justice O'Connor granted "*Intervenor standing*" to a number of applicants who he found "*have a genuine concern about issues raised by the mandate and who have a particular perspective and/or expertise which I have determined will be of assistance to me in this Inquiry.*" As intervenors, these parties will have the opportunity to make submissions on various facets of the Inquiry including closing submissions. However, without a further order from Justice O'Connor, they will not participate in the examination of witnesses.

The Canadian Council on American-Islamic Relations, The Canadian Arab Federation and the Muslim Canadian Congress, who are grouped together in a coalition, are granted intervenor standing. The Canadian Islamic Congress, The National Council on Canada-Arab Relations and the Muslim Community Council of Ottawa-Gatineau have each been granted standing as Intervenor. Justice O'Connor recommended funding for two counsel for those six organizations, urging them to work together to the extent possible.

The six Civil Liberties and Canadian Democracy/Sovereignty groups that appeared before Justice O'Connor last week were also granted standing as intervenors to pursue the interests

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identified in their applications. They are: The British Columbia Civil Liberties Association, The Minority Advocacy and Rights Council, The Canadian Labour Congress, The Law Union of Ontario, The International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group and The Council of Canadians and the Polaris Institute. Justice O'Connor urged that those organizations try to form coalitions and he recommended funding for two counsel for this group of applicants.

Three International Human Rights groups were also granted standing as intervenors. They are: The Redress Trust, the Association for the Prevention of Torture and the World Organization against Torture, working as a group, Amnesty International and The International Campaign against Torture.

More details will be available on our Web site: www.ararcommission.ca

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 Commission is also mandated to recommend an arm's length review mechanism for the activities of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police with respect to national security.

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