



Canadian Arab Federation
La Federation Canado-Arabe

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CAF calls on the government to enforce safeguards on information sharing

Toronto - The Canadian Arab Federation (CAF) is disturbed to hear that the necessary safeguards put in place to protect Canadian citizens information and to ensure that their civil liberties are upheld, were set aside in the aftermath of 9/11.

At the Arar Commission hearings yesterday, RCMP Superintendent Michel Cabana testified that normal protocols for sharing information about Canadians with foreign agencies were set aside in clear violation of the Privacy Act .

"The testimony of Mr. Cabana basically confirms our claim that security agencies have not been following the rules when it comes to dealing with Arab and Muslim Canadians," said Omar Alghabra, CAF President. "The tragic irony is that those violations ended up terrorizing Canadians instead of protecting them."

CAF is troubled that unsubstantiated allegations and critical information was disseminated to both domestic and foreign agencies in clear contravention of the rights of all Canadian citizens. Mr. Cabana who led the RCMP investigation in Ottawa in 2002 stated that Maher Arar was targeted because he was identified as a possible link to suspects.

"The government needs to ensure that immediate corrective measures are reinstated, so that the RCMP is no longer in a position to funnel information to foreign agencies and governments," said Mohamed Boudjenane, CAF executive director.

CAF urges the government to enforce, immediately, necessary safeguards. The Arar Commission must complete its role without any obstruction or delay.

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