



Canadian Arab Federation
La Fédération Canado-Arabe

NEWS RELEASE

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Common Security Agenda threatens Canada's Human Rights

Toronto – the Canadian Arab Federation (CAF) decries the Conservative government's negotiation and signing of a public safety treaty with Israel, a country which is continually cited by human rights agencies to be a repeat violator of international law and one which does not even share a common border with Canada. This discomfiting development serves to further undermine the civil liberties of all Canadians.

“Sharing security information with a country that is accused of practicing apartheid in the occupied territories and torture against prisoners sends a dangerous signal to Canadians, particularly human rights and peace activists and those of Arab descent, that their legitimate concerns about Canada's relationship with Israel will be disregarded and ignored”, said Khaled Mouammar, CAF National President.

Israel is a notorious and regular violator of international law as it relates to the Palestinian population, both occupying and colonizing the Palestinian territories in contravention of the 4th Geneva Convention. Former Special Rapporteur for United Nations Commission on Human Rights, John Dugard, Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa and former US President Jimmy Carter have stated that Israel openly practices an apartheid regime. Furthermore, Canadian Louise Arbour, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, has insinuated that Israel is guilty of committing war crimes.

Additionally, Amnesty International has published reports confirming that Israel does indeed practice torture against its own citizens, especially if they are Arab. Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel are routinely discriminated against by the police and justice system. The Israeli government clearly believes that anyone who opposes their apartheid policies and occupation is their enemy; by signing a public safety agreement, Canada is endorsing the illegal occupation and everything for which it stands.

“Domestically, racial profiling is real and targets Arab and Muslim Canadians everyday be it at a border, on an airplane or with a police officer. Justice O'Connor's report stressed that Canadians need to be protected from this but the government's actions indicate that they are shirking away from this responsibility. The primary area of cooperation between the two countries is ‘border management and security’ which certainly does not bode well for the well-being and protection of Canadians, if Israel is the country with whom you want to associate and share sensitive information such as this”, said Mohamed Boudjenane, CAF Executive Director.

CAF fears that this agreement will make Canada take another step backwards and emulate the repugnant Israeli policies and practices, in the name of public safety and security.

The agreement came into force on March 23, 2008 and was signed by the Ministry of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness of Canada and the Ministry of Public Security of Israel.

-30-

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CONTACT:

Khaled Mouammar
CAF National President
416-879-6766
benwalid@rogers.com

Mohamed Boudjenane
CAF Executive Director
416-493-8635 x 23
ed@caf.ca

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