

Online Petition – Maher Arar – Call for Public Inquiry

October 2003

On September 26, 2002, Syrian-born Canadian Maher Arar began his trip home from a family vacation. A routine stopover in New York to change planes changed his life forever.

Within days he had been accused of “terrorism” and deported to Syria via Jordan.

For over a year Maher Arar was isolated from his family and the outside world. Reportedly in solitary confinement and possibly enduring torture, he was never informed of any charges or evidence against him. On the eve of a trial before the State Security Court, Syrian authorities suddenly released him. He finally arrived home in Canada on October 6th.

But this is not the end of the story. Far too many questions remain about what really happened, including any involvement of Canadian law enforcement and security agencies. Without the answers, there is no guarantee it won't happen again.

Join our call for a public inquiry.

Petition:

Dear Prime Minister:

Although Maher Arar has now returned home to Canada, too many questions remain about how and why he endured over a year of harsh conditions, possibly even torture, in a Syrian prison without charge or trial.

Security concerns are not an excuse for undermining or ignoring basic safeguards against torture and false imprisonment. No one should be detained without charge. And no one should be deported to a country where they are at risk of torture.

There must be a clear public accounting of why Maher Arar was put in peril through deportation from the United States to Syria. We need assurances that that this will not happen again.

We call for a public inquiry into the role, if any, that was played by Canadian law enforcement or security agencies in this case.

