

The Honourable Vic Toews  
Minister of Public Safety  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

October 31, 2011

Dear Minister Toews,

I am writing to urge that the government, at long last, take steps to ensure that Abdullah Almalki, Ahmad Abou-Elmaati and Muayyed Nureddin receive redress for the role Canadian officials played in the serious human rights violations, including torture, that they have experienced. Amnesty International has repeatedly called on the government to provide them with compensation and an apology. We are again calling on the government to do so, in light of recent revelations highlighting serious shortcomings in the way Mr. Almalki's case was dealt with in early stages by the RCMP.

Amnesty International has followed these three men's cases for many years, beginning when they were still in detention in Syria and Egypt. At that time we called on authorities in both countries to cease the serious human rights violations they were experiencing. We also expressed concern as information came to light indicating that Canadian officials had played a role in what had happened to them. When they were released and returned to Canada we joined the three men and the many other individuals and organizations calling for a full review of their cases.

We welcomed the government's announcement in December 2006 that there would be an inquiry into their cases, conducted by former Supreme Court of Canada Justice Frank Iacobucci. We regretted the fact that the terms of reference for the inquiry were limited and meant that the hearings were primarily held *in camera*. However, we welcomed Commissioner Iacobucci's report, released three years ago in October 2008. The report highlighted numerous ways that the actions of Canadian officials contributed to the serious human rights violations, including unlawful detention and torture, the three men experienced in Syria and, additionally in Mr. Abou-Elmaati's case, Egypt.

We hoped and expected that the government would move rapidly to ensure redress for the three men following the release of Commissioner Iacobucci's report. We were, instead, deeply dismayed to learn that the government was not prepared to offer a reasonable level of compensation to Messrs. Almalki, Abou-Elmaati and Nureddin and that the three men had instead been forced to turn to the courts to obtain redress for the deficient conduct Commissioner Iacobucci had documented in detail. Our concern about the government's position mounted following a June 2009 report from the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security and a subsequent resolution passed by a majority of the House of Commons, calling on the government to provide the men with compensation and an apology.

Last week, as you are likely aware Minister, Abdullah Almalki publicly released documents he obtained through an Access to Information Request. Of greatest concern was an internal RCMP document indicating that on October 4, 2001, they were "finding it difficult to establish anything on him other than the fact that he is an Arab running around." It is obviously very worrying to read such comments, which have a racist dimension and suggest an approach to the case based on profiling.

Of further concern is that Commissioner Iacobucci noted in his report that on this same date RCMP officials sent information about Mr. Almalki to Syrian officials linking him to al-Qaeda and describing him as posing an imminent threat. The Commissioner found that characterization of Mr. Almalki to have been "inflammatory, inaccurate and without investigative foundation." The revelation that the RCMP themselves, on that very date, knew that they had not "established anything on him," underscores the serious nature of the Commissioner's conclusion.

Minister, Mr. Almalki has waited too long for justice. The information made public last week again highlights how crucial it is that his long wait, along with those of Mr. Abou-Elmaati and Mr. Nureddin, come to an end by providing them with appropriate redress for what they have suffered. We note that in an October 29<sup>th</sup> editorial, *Accountability for Almalki*, the Ottawa Citizen has similarly noted that "accountability in this case is long overdue." We urge you to take that step without any further delay.

Sincerely,

Alex Neve  
Secretary General