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Abofian Abdelrazik speaks about his experiences in Sudan for the first time during a press conference on Parliament Hill in Ottawa on Thursday, July 23, 2009. Abdelrazik was exiled in Sudan in 2003 after a request from CSIS had him jailed. (THE CANADIAN PRESS/Sean Kilpatrick)

Abdelrazik supporters gather for solidarity rally

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A crowd gathered at Phillips Square downtown on Saturday afternoon to show their solidarity with Abofian Abdelrazik, a Montreal man who spent nearly six years exiled in Sudan.

Even after returning home in June, Abdelrazik says he is still "imprisoned" because he remains on a United Nations no-fly list and the designation carries with it a host of restrictions beyond travel.

The group is demanding "that the federal government take serious action to restore Mr. Abdelrazik's full liberty and actively oppose the 1267 list."

While he remains on the UN 1267 list, Abdelrazik is forbidden from receiving any material aid from anyone, including salary, loans, food or clothes.

Anyone giving him money or paying him could be regarded as a criminal.

Arrest without charges in Sudan

The 47-year-old went to Sudan in 2003 to visit his ill mother, and was arrested under suspicion of being linked to terrorist groups.

Abdelrazik was never charged, but beaten, threatened and tortured during two separate periods of imprisonment.

After he was released from jail, Abdelrazik took refuge in the Canadian Embassy in Khartoum, the Sudanese capital.

He spent 14 months there before he was allowed to return to Montreal.

A judge ruled June 4 that the Harper government had breached Abdelrazik's constitutional rights by refusing to provide him with the necessary travel documents.

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With files from The Canadian Press