

## **Government rejects effort to repatriate man stranded in Sudan**

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The Conservative government is rejecting an opposition effort to bring home a Sudanese-Canadian man stranded in Africa.

The government said Abousfian Abdelrazik is still listed as having ties to al-Qaida by the United Nations Security Council and is therefore subject to a travel ban and asset freeze.

Abdelrazik, who is a Canadian citizen who was born in Sudan, has been barred from returning home and is living at the Canadian embassy in Khartoum.

The NDP tried using a parliamentary procedure this week to bring him home. MP Paul Dewar tabled a motion requiring Abdelrazik to testify at a parliamentary committee.

The motion passed a Commons committee vote and opposition members said they would use the parliamentary subpoena to force Abdelrazik's repatriation to Canada.

The government did not initially respond to this week's procedural twist – but it issued a statement Wednesday making it clear there would be no change in its position.

The statement cites the Security Council travel ban and says Canada takes seriously both its legal obligations to the UN and the need to combat terrorism.

"Mr. Abdelrazik is at our Embassy in Sudan and we continue to provide Mr. Abdelrazik with consular assistance," the statement said.

"As this matter is currently under litigation we cannot comment further on the situation."

Although he was once accused of having ties to terrorists, Abdelrazik has been cleared by the RCMP and CSIS of any wrongdoing.

But the government won't issue the travel documents the Montreal man needs to return home.

Dewar's motion passed easily Monday, with support from all opposition parties while the Conservative members abstained.

The Ottawa MP says that should be enough to force the government to hand Abdelrazik his travel papers.

Dewar said Wednesday that the committee clerk planned to issue a formal invitation for Abdelrazik to appear.

After that, he said, it's clear what should happen next to Abdelrazik: "He comes home. I mean in my opinion, he comes home."

It's less clear whether the government would consider Dewar's motion to carry any legal weight.

The House of Commons Procedure and Practice guide states that the powers delegated to committee members are of no force when a committee is outside of Canada.

Also, Joseph Maingot's influential book *Parliamentary Privilege in Canada* says parliamentary writs do not apply outside the country.