

# Exclusive: Hassan Diab speaks out for first time

BY CHRIS COBB, THE OTTAWA CITIZEN    AUGUST 5, 2011 12:02 PM



Hassan Diab.

**Photograph by:** Wayne Cuddington, The Ottawa Citizen

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OTTAWA — University of Ottawa sociology professor Hassan Diab was arrested in November 2008 during a dramatic mid-morning SWAT team raid on his Gatineau apartment and charged with four counts of murder, multiple counts of attempted murder and destruction of property.

According to French prosecutors, Lebanon-born Diab was part of a Palestinian terrorist gang that planted a bomb outside a Paris synagogue on Oct. 3, 1980. The blast was powerful enough to rocket parked cars several storeys into the air. The four killed were passersby. The injured, many of whom still carry physical and emotional scars, were inside and outside of the synagogue where the Jewish festival Simchas Torah had been celebrated.

Although the extradition judge said the evidence sent from France was weak and unlikely to result in a conviction if Diab were tried in Canada, he said he had no choice but to commit the academic for extradition.

In an exclusive interview with the Ottawa Citizen's Chris Cobb, Diab says he is the innocent victim of mistaken identity and denies being in France when the terrorist blast happened. He vows to use every legal avenue possible to prevent being extradited to Paris where he would face imprisonment for life if found guilty.

In his first and only interview since being arrested, Diab speaks about being tailed by the RCMP for

more than a year before his arrest, his “nightmare” incarceration at the Ottawa Regional Detention Centre and the economic ruin his arrest and onerous bail conditions have brought to his life.

Look for the Diab interview in tomorrow’s Ottawa Citizen.

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