

Independent Jewish Voices Appalled By Court Rulings On Hassan Diab And Mohamed Harkat

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OTTAWA – With the decision to extradite Hassan Diab to France affirmed by the Ontario Court of Appeal, human rights supporters across the country are appalled by the decision, and fearful of the precedent this sets for Canadian citizens.

“Independent Jewish Voices is stunned by the Kafkaesque trial against Dr. Diab, who has been wrongly accused of a heinous crime committed decades ago,” says IJV spokesperson Sid Shniad. “Despite the fact that Dr. Diab’s fingerprints, palm prints, handwriting and physical description do not match those of the suspect, he still faces extradition to a foreign country. What kind of democracy are we living in?”

Due to Canada’s extradition laws, it makes no difference that according to an Ontario judge, the evidence levelled against Dr. Diab is “confusing,” “weak,” and “suspect.” The request—however unreasonable—of a foreign country, takes priority over the rights of a Canadian citizen.

Dr Diab’s extradition is opposed by countless civil society organizations that support human rights. There is, however, one organization in particular that has been publicly supportive of Dr. Diab’s extradition: The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CJA).

“Independent Jewish Voices is deeply disturbed that the pro-Israel lobby group CJA—which falsely claims to represent Canada’s diverse Jewish communities— has been supportive of Dr. Diab’s extradition,” says Shniad. “It is an affront to the Jewish tradition of support for universal human rights, including due process under the law, to support the extradition of a man accused of a crime despite the absence of any valid evidence against him.”

This decision directly follows the Supreme Court’s decision to uphold the Security Certificate process in the case of Mohamed Harkat.

“Canada’s treatment of Dr. Diab and Mr. Harkat are reflective of the same systemic flaws,” says Shniad. “Our government and judicial system are in the business of violating international law, demonizing Arabs and Muslims, and branding them terrorists while denying them the right to a fair trial. All those who believe in justice should be outraged. We should demand that Parliament intervene immediately to abolish Security Certificates and end unjust practices like the extradition proceedings against Dr. Diab.”

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