

MPJ



Saskatchewan Muslim Voice on Public Affairs

Muslims for Peace & Justice

P.O. Box 28044
Regina, SK S4N 7L1

Tel: 1-866-284-5910

Email: muslims4peace@yahoo.ca

URL: <http://mpjregina.tripod.com>

--FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE--

SECURITY PRACTICE IS A THREAT TO BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS

(Regina, SK – July 11, 2003) Muslims for Peace & Justice (MPJ), a Saskatchewan-based Muslim advocacy organization calls for an immediate restructuring of the current practice of detaining and possibly expelling persons from Canada based on a ministerial certificate, as laid out under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.

The ministerial certificate was used in May 2003 to detain a Moroccan-born man named Adil Charkaoui, on suspicion that he was connected to terrorists. In addition, Mahmoud Jaballah has spent almost 2 years in a Toronto detention centre on similar suspicions.

“Through the use of these so-called security certificates, individuals are being held in detention for an indefinite period of time without due process rights. Moreover, the use of secret evidence against these individuals renders them unable to defend themselves,” said MPJ Communications Director Kashif Ahmed.

“Although MPJ believes that Canadian security authorities must remain vigilant for possible terrorists and criminals that may enter Canada, it is un-Canadian to hold a person without laying charges,” said MPJ President Dr. Naiyer Habib. “Such actions are an affront against the rule of law and justice.”

MPJ calls for the federal government to devise a new course of action that allows both evidence to be challenged and Canadian national security protected. The current practice of using certificates does not provide the usual checks and balances that are part of criminal proceedings in Canada. Law enforcement must be held accountable if they do not follow proper procedures.

“MPJ believes that such security practices have begun to challenge basic human rights and civil liberties in Canada. Unfortunately, it is Canadian Muslims and Arabs that have become the ‘usual suspects’ because of their religion and ethnicity,” added MPJ President Dr. Naiyer Habib.

CONTACT: Dr. Naiyer Habib
President
(306) 766-6999

Kashif Ahmed
Communications Director
1-866-284-5910