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PRESS RELEASE

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## **The Canadian Embassy expulses 4 Canadian citizens requesting help**

**July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013** – On the morning of July 8th, the Canadian Nathalie Morin was accompanied by her three children and their Saudi father in order to request help in finding a solution between the two governments so that she may return to Canada after being detained in Saudi Arabia for the last 8 years.

When leaving Dammam, where they live 5 hours from Riyadh, here is the e-mail that Nathalie sent to her family, friends and certain journalists :

(translated from French)

*«hello, we are leaving dammam in the direction of riyadh and we will be at the canadian embassy Monday morning. We will stay at the canadian embassy until canada finds a solution wit the saudi government to resolve our case that has been ongoing for 8 years. I am asking to come home to canada with my children and i am ready to negotiate with compromise that will be in the best interest of everyone. Nathalie Morin»*

Representatives of the Canadian embassy first received Nathalie and her children in the hall of the embassy, making them wait for several hours without food. Then the consul René Dagenais contacted the father to come get the children to take them to eat. When they returned, the children, aged 4, 7 and 10 years old, were denied access and left to cry for an hour in front of the gate before the father came back to get them. Samir asked the guard why they couldn't go in when he could see other children entering and the guard replied that these were his orders.

At the end of the day, when the embassy employees were finishing their work day, René Dagenais came out the street to speak with Saeed, the father. He asked him to approach the gate, then he asked Nathalie to approach the gate to speak with Saeed. At this point another embassy employee put his hand on Nathalie's back and pushed her off embassy premises, to the other side of the fence. When Nathalie tried to defend herself and ask his name, he showed her his name, gave her a pencil and added with a sarcastic tone that she could put his name on her website. Then he pushed Nathalie again. All this under the surveillance camera, with no shame.

Nathalie Morin's Support Committee denounces the inhumane and arrogant attitude used by the Canadian Embassy staff entowards their fellow citizens. This is not acceptable coming from a democratic country, signatory of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and having its own Charter of Rights and Freedoms tied into its Constitution. Additionnally, the Canadian Embassy is well aware of the dramatic situation concerning Nathalie and her children. Their case has been dragging on for 8 years in the pile of dossiers at the Canadian Embassy in Riyadh and at the Foreign Affairs ministry in Ottawa.

Now that at last the father of the children consents to let them leave the country without him and brings the children to the Canadian Embassy, to ensure their return to Canada, what is the Canadian Ambassador in Riyadh Tom MacDonald, the Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird and the Consular Affairs Minister Diane Ablonczy, waiting for to stiffen up their negotiations with Saudi authorities so that Nathalie, Samir, Abdullah and Sarah can return to Canada? Where their health, safety and quality of life will be assured.

**We ask that the Canadian Embassy in Riyadh take in Nathalie and her children, and offer them adequate living conditions (food and lodging) while intensifying the negotiations to have them liberated from Saudi territory in the coming hours.**

Nathalie Morin's Support Committee is a non-profit citizen organisation that is made up of concerned people and has the support of numerous women's groups, Members of National Assembly, Members of Parliament and other citizens..

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