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Toronto man facing terror charges granted bail

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A Toronto man facing terrorism charges after allegedly planning to join a Somali group linked to al-Qaeda has been granted bail.

Mohamed Hersi, 25, appeared in court Friday and bail was set at \$200,000 as his mother, aunts, uncle and friends sat in the courtroom.

According to his bail conditions, Hersi must be in the company of one of his four sureties or his lawyer at all times while he is not allowed to possess firearms or access the Internet. He also must remain in Ontario.

Hersi's lawyer Anser Farooq said both he and his client were pleased bail was granted following a two-day hearing that was held earlier this month.

"It's a very thorough and well thought out decision," said Farooq in an interview.

Justice of the Peace Hilda Weiss took more than a week to deliberate on the bail issue, he noted.

"She expressed her views on the case and I would hope the Crown pays some attention to that and considers whether or not this prosecution is worth pursuing," he said. "I would certainly hope they decide it's not worth pursuing."

Farooq said he is trying to get more disclosure from the Crown about its case.

Evidence presented during the bail hearing can't be reported due to a court-ordered publication ban.

Hersi will be back in court on May 26.

The RCMP arrested Hersi at Toronto's Pearson Airport last month on his way to Cairo via London.

Police allege he planned to join the Somali militant group al-Shabaab, which is trying to overthrow Somalia's transitional government. Canada has labelled the group a terrorist organization.

Farooq has said his client had no intention of becoming a member of al-Shabaab and was set up by a man who tried to befriend him.

Police suspect several young Canadians have gone to Somalia to join the group in recent years.



Mohamed Hersi was granted bail on Friday. Alex Tavshunsky/CBC



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