

Open Letter from Canadian Muslim Leaders and Community Representatives

Our hearts are deeply saddened by the tragic loss of life of six individuals as a result of the terrorist attack at the Centre Culturel Islamique de Québec (CCIQ) on January 29, 2017. We join our fellow Canadians in mourning their loss and sending our condolences to their families and loved ones and wishing those who were injured a speedy recovery.

We thank our fellow Canadians who showed strong support for Muslim communities, demonstrating their solidarity in a variety of ways. Through vigils, rallies, online messages, cards, and human chains around mosques, Canadian Muslims felt embraced by their fellow community members. The sympathetic words of our elected officials were also comforting at a difficult time.

The question for all of us must be – now what?

How do we move on from this heartbreaking event and ensure that we learn lessons from this tragedy? How can we work harder to stamp out hate – against anyone, for any reason – in our communities?

We do have some recommendations that we hope will be heard across Canada today and which we hope will result in concrete action.

We, representatives from Canadian Muslim organizations and communities, call on municipal, provincial, and federal governments to work together and to take immediate steps to support efforts to combat Islamophobia and hatred in our communities.

We believe that each level of government has a key role to play. We recommend action items at each level of government.

At the municipal level, we call for:

1. All city councils to boost resources for local police services to receive training on hate crimes and to provide education and outreach to diverse communities.

This would include quarterly updates to local police services boards and a publicly released annual review of hate crimes. Training should also be provided for all officers in the area of bias-neutral policing.

At the provincial level, we call for:

1. All provincial governments to create an Anti-Racism Directorate (ARD), similar to that of the province of Ontario, which examines issues of systemic racism within the government's mandate, as well as work to create and support public education campaigns on related topics.
2. All Ministries of Education to commit to creating a mandatory course on systemic racism at the secondary school level which explores xenophobia, anti-Black racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and their impacts on our society. Further, ministries should ensure that adequate

resources and funding is available to provide ongoing training and resources for educators on these topics.

At the federal level, we call for:

1. All members of parliament to support Motion 103 (M103), tabled by Iqra Khalid, Member of Parliament for Mississauga-Erin Mills, which calls on the federal government to study ways in which the government can reduce or eliminate systemic racism and religious discrimination in Canada, including Islamophobia. Full text below*.

2. That January 29 be declared by Parliament as the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Islamophobia.

Now is the time to take meaningful steps forward in order to combat Islamophobia collectively. In so doing, we honour not only the memory of those whose lives were lost and their families, friends and communities, we also honour and uphold the values of multiculturalism, respect and diversity enshrined in our cherished *Canadian Charter of Rights & Freedoms*.

We have full confidence that these recommendations will provide a way forward for the betterment of our collective communities and reaffirm Canada's leading role in the fight against xenophobia in all its forms.

***Motion 103 (M-103)
Systemic racism and religious discrimination**

Text of the Motion: That, in the opinion of the House, the government should: (a) recognize the need to quell the increasing public climate of hate and fear; (b) condemn Islamophobia and all forms of systemic racism and religious discrimination and take note of House of Commons' petition e-411 and the issues raised by it; and (c) request that the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage undertake a study on how the government could (i) develop a whole-of-government approach to reducing or eliminating systemic racism and religious discrimination including Islamophobia, in Canada, while ensuring a community-centered focus with a holistic response through evidence-based policy-making, (ii) collect data to contextualize hate crime reports and to conduct needs assessments for impacted communities, and that the Committee should present its findings and recommendations to the House no later than 240 calendar days from the adoption of this motion, provided that in its report, the Committee should make recommendations that the government may use to better reflect the enshrined rights and freedoms in the Constitution Acts, including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Signed (Alphabetical Order):

Canadian Muslim Organizations:

- Alberta Muslim Public Affairs Committee (AMPAC)

- AMAL-Québec
- L'Association musulmane québécoise (AMQ)
- The British Columbia Muslim Association (BCMA)
- L'Association musulmane québécoise (AMQ)
- Canadian Association of Muslims with Disabilities (CAM-D)
- The Canadian Association for Muslim Women in Law (CAMWL)
- Canadian Centre for Deen Studies
- Canadian Council of Imams (CCI)
- Canadian Council of Muslim Women – National (CCMW)
- Canadian Council of Muslim Women – Montreal (CCMW)
- Canadian Muslim Alliance (CMA)
- Canadian Muslim Lawyers Association / Association canadienne des avocats musulmans (CMLA/ACAM)
- The Canadian Muslim Vote (TCMV)
- Centre Culturel Islamique de Québec (CCIQ)
- Collective of Muslim Feminists of Quebec
- DawaNet
- Downtown Muslim Professional Network (DMPN)
- Federation of Muslim Women
- Islam Care Centre
- Islamic Association of Saskatchewan (Regina Branch)
- Islamic Family and Social Services Association (Edmonton)
- Islamic History Month Canada (IHMC)
- Islamic Shia Ithna 'Asheri Jamaat (ISIJ) of Toronto
- Islamic Society of North America – Canada (ISNA-Canada)
- Islamic Social Services Association (ISSA)
- LaVoieDesFemmes
- London Muslim Mosque (LMM)
- Muslim Association of Canada (MAC)
- Muslim Coordinating Council of the National Capital Region (MCCNCR)
- Muslim Council of Peel
- Muslim Society of PEI
- Muslim Link Newspaper
- National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM)
- North American Spiritual Revival (NASR)
- Ottawa Muslim Association (OMA)
- Own It Institute of Canada Ltd.
- 3Own: Muslim Youth and Family Services
- Think for Actions
- Windsor Islamic Association
- Windsor Islamic Council

Individuals:

- A. Latif Mirza
- Abd Alfatah Twakkal, Imam & Head of Islamic Affairs, London Muslim Mosque
- Ebad Rahman, Barrister & Solicitor
- Ehab Lotayef, Engineer, Writer & Activist
- Fariha Naqvi-Mohamed, Journalist & Founder CanadianMomeh.com
- Ibrahim Danial, Director, Downtown Muslim Professional Network (DMPN)
- Ibrahim Hussain, M.A., Arabic Studies & Theology
- Jeewan Chanicka, M.Ed., Educator & Community Activist
- Prof. Mohammad Fadel, University of Toronto Faculty of Law
- Mukhbir Singh, President, World Sikh Organization (WSO) of Canada
- Muneeb Nasir, Executive Director, Córdoba Centre for Civic Engagement and Leadership
- M. Mustafa Jilani, Barrister & Solicitor
- Naseem Mithoowani, Barrister & Solicitor
- Prof. Natasha Bakht, University of Ottawa Faculty of Law
- Nora Hindy
- Rania Mirza, Teacher, York Region District School Board
- Sabha Hazai, Barrister & Solicitor
- Saleha Khan, Family Honour Project, London
- Sameer Zuberi, Montreal human rights advocate
- Sandra Noe, Chair, Federation of Muslim Women

Community Allies:

- Amnesty International Canada
- Canada Without Poverty
- Comité Solid'ère
- C.O.R. organisme de Communication pour l'Ouverture et le Rapprochement interculturel
- Global Shapers Montréal (a youth leadership initiative by the World Economic Forum)
- The International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group (ICLMG)
- InterPares
- Mosaic Institute
- Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)
- Toronto and York Region Labour Council
- UneFilleUnefamille
- Urban Alliance on Race Relations
- Vaughan African Canadian Association (VACA)