



**Muslim Council of Peel Statement on
National Day of Remembrance of the Quebec City Mosque Attack and Action Against Islamophobia**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Mississauga - January 28, 2022) Tomorrow, the Muslim Council of Peel alongside Canadians across the nation will remember the shocking and tragic event that took place in the Quebec City Mosque and will honour those beautiful souls that lost their lives and those that were injured during this senseless act of violence.

The Quebec City Mosque terror attack was the first mass attack against Canadian Muslims and worst mass murder in a house of worship in Canada's history. Today, we honour and pray for Ibrahima Barry, Mamadou Tanou Barry, Khaled Belkacemi, Abdelkrim Hassane, Azzedine Soufiane, Aboubaker Thabti.

Since this devastating crime in 2017, racism and hatred, manifested in the form of Islamophobia, are serious issues that have significantly affected Canadian Muslims. To illustrate, the slain killing of Mohamed-Aslim Zafis at the doors of the Etobicoke Mosque, the terrorist attack in London, Ontario, and the continued hate crimes against Muslims, are a just a few examples of this hate. As a result the Canadian government declared January 29 to be a National Day of Remembrance and Action Against Islamophobia in order to honour the victims and express solidarity with the survivors.

The Region of Peel is home to more than 150,000 Canadian Muslims, as well as more than 60 Islamic Centers, Mosques, and Schools. Canada's Muslim population currently numbers over one million individuals; by 2030, this figure is predicted to more than double to 2.7 million. Canadian Muslims are a significant part of the country's cultural diversity, social fabric, and economy. Muslim contributions and participation in the shaping of our country have been significant in a variety of fields, including the arts, sports, academia, sciences, literature, public policy, and other fields.

We thank the City of Mississauga and the City of Brampton for being strong voices in condemning Islamophobia.

- On January 29, 2019, Brampton city council unanimously passed a resolution proclaiming Jan. 29 as a day of remembrance and action on Islamophobia. In November 2021, Brampton city council unanimously endorsed the National Council of Canadian Muslims' (NCCM) municipal summit recommendations to combat Islamophobia
- In October 2020, the City of Mississauga passed a motion to unequivocally condemns all forms of Islamophobia, hate speech or threats against Muslims or Mosques
- In October 2020, the Peel Police Service committed to tackling systemic racism including Islamophobia through a partnership with the Ontario Human Rights Commission
- In October 2021, The Peel District School Board approved an anti-Islamophobia strategy



Despite these efforts, the number of crimes motivated by race or ethnicity continues to rise in Peel Region. Hate crimes against members of faith communities increased by 54 percent between 2018 and 2020.

The Muslim Council of Peel (MCP) has been advocating for addressing systemic Islamophobia in Peel institutions and increasing hate crimes. From advising the Peel District School Board to the Chief of Peel Police, members of MCP have actively spoken out for Muslims living in Peel.

MCP calls for municipalities to:

- pass municipal street harassment bylaws that are proportional and constitutional. Bylaws should also address clearly hateful verbal assaults and give authorities the ability to ticket and fine when necessary.
- provide dedicated funding for local community-based anti-Islamophobia initiatives.
- to implement anti-Islamophobia advisory councils while ensuring that there is appropriate representation of diverse local Muslim communities.
- dedicate specific funding for anti-Islamophobia public awareness campaigns.
- invest in celebrating the history of local Canadian Muslims and initiatives through a concrete program that brings these figures and names to the forefront of local-level recognition
- redirect funding towards alternative measures to policing in municipal budgets.
- develop models for training young Muslim leaders for the future such as the Youth Fellowship program in Toronto.

Contact:

Rabia Khedr

MCP Board Director

905-270-9679

executivedirector@mcpeel.ca