

Joint statement on the murder outside of International Muslim Organization

September 24, 2020

As members of the [Anti-hate Community Leaders' Group](#), we condemn the murder of Mohamed-Aslim Zafis on September 12th, 2020, at the doorsteps of the of the International Muslim Organization, a mosque located in the Rexdale neighbourhood of Toronto. The media have reported that the suspect charged with the first-degree murder of Zafis has shared social media posts that appear to be content from a satanic neo-Nazi group which is anti-Semitic and racist.

Since the start of the pandemic, we have been seeing increased incidents of hate crimes, online hate speech, and hate incidents throughout Canada. We have seen an exponential rise in hate against Asian Canadians and most recently in Toronto, against South Asian and Muslim Canadians, not to mention the longstanding issues of Anti-Indigenous and Anti-Black racism in Canada.

It is time that our government take hate in this country seriously and double down on their efforts to combat all forms of hate and racism. We urge the Government of Canada to:

- Develop a comprehensive Anti-hate Strategy as part of its Anti-Racism Secretariat to specifically target hate-motivated crimes and online hate
- Once again refer to our [recommendations for legislative changes](#) to combat hate crimes
- Take strong and aggressive approach with social media companies if they fail to monitor and remove hate from their platforms
- Provide stable funding to civic organizations to conduct Anti-hate awareness campaigns for the communities they serve

We also call on the Toronto Police Services (TPS) and the Attorney General of Ontario to investigate and prosecute the Zafis murder as a hate crime and ensure that the TPS involve experts with knowledge of the Nazi Satanist ideology into the investigation. Should no hate crime charges be laid we demand that the TPS and the Ministry of the Attorney General release the results of its investigation into why no hate crimes charges were laid.

It is not enough to just condemn this heinous crime. After the Quebec Mosque shooting in 2017, we collectively said, "never again". The murder of Zafis shows we have not done nearly enough to tackle this issue. Swift and uncompromising action to combat hate needs to happen now.

Signed,

Members of the Anti-hate Community Leaders' Group

1. Across Boundaries: An Ethnoracial Mental Health Centre
2. Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention
3. Anela Jadunandan
4. Bernie Farber
5. Canadian Anti-Hate Network
6. Canadian Arab Federation
7. Canadian Arab Anti-discrimination Committee
8. Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture

9. Canadian Muslim Vote
10. Catholic Crosscultural Services
11. Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic
12. Chinese Canadian National Council - Toronto Chapter
13. City of Toronto - Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit
14. Coalition Against White Supremacy and Islamophobia
15. Colour of Poverty - Colour of Change Steering Committee
16. Council of Agencies Serving South Asians
17. El-Tawhid Juma Circle: The Unity Mosque
18. Gibraltar Leadership Academy
19. Hispanic Development Council
20. Islamic Foundation of Toronto
21. Jeewan Chanicka
22. J-SpaceCanada
23. Karen R. Mock
24. Labour Community Services of Metropolitan Toronto Inc.
25. Midyanta Community Services
26. Naseem Mithoowani
27. Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion
28. Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants
29. Ontario Human Rights Commission
30. Punjabi Community Health Services
31. Roots Community Services
32. Salaam Canada
33. Social Services Network
34. South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario
35. Tamil Canadian Centre for Civic Action
36. United Way of Greater Toronto
37. Urban Alliance on Race Relations
38. Walied Khogali Ali
39. World Sikh Organization
40. YWCA Canada