
City Council

Notice of Motion

MM36.5	ACTION			Ward:All
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Declaring January 29 as a Day of Remembrance and Action on Islamophobia - by Councillor Neethan Shan, seconded by Councillor Joe Mihevc

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Neethan Shan, seconded by Councillor Joe Mihevc, recommends that:

1. City Council reaffirm that Islamophobia, like all other forms of racism, hate, xenophobia, and bigotry, has no place in the City of Toronto.
2. City Council designate January 29 as a Day of Remembrance and Action on Islamophobia in the City of Toronto for future years.
3. City Council formally request the Province of Ontario to designate January 29 as a Day of Remembrance and Action on Islamophobia for the Province for future years.
4. City Council formally request the Government of Canada to designate January 29 as a Day of Remembrance and Action on Islamophobia for the country for future years.

Summary

At 7:50 p.m. on Sunday January 29, 2017, a gunman carried out an act of terrorism at the Centre Culturel Islamique de Québec where men, women and children were gathered for night prayers in Quebec City.

This unspeakable act of hate left six dead and several injured. Countless family and community members continue to live with trauma from the horrific attack, and one of the survivors—Aymen Derbali—remains paralyzed. The victims who lost their lives are: Ibrahima Barry, Azzedine Soufiane, Aboubaker Thabti, Abdelkrim Hassane, Mamadou Tanou Barry, and Khaled Belkacemi.

In the aftermath of this attack, many Torontonians and Canadians came together in mourning and solidarity. City Council voted unanimously to endorse the National Council of Canadian Muslims Charter for Inclusive Communities, and reject Islamophobia, hate and bigotry through Member Motion MM24.24. This Motion was put forward by Councillor Joe Mihevc, and seconded by Councillor Joe Cressy.

However, also in the days that followed, in many Canadian cities, reports show that acts of hate skyrocketed. In Toronto, some two weeks after the incident, bigots harassed and intimidated attendees at a downtown Toronto mosque, demonstrating that Islamophobia, racism and hate remain a reality for many in our City.

Islamophobia negatively impacts community members' sense of safety, wellbeing and ability to lead fulfilling lives. It is therefore our responsibility as a City that prides itself on its inclusivity and diversity to take action on Islamophobia, just as it is incumbent upon us to address all other forms of racism, hate, xenophobia, and bigotry.

As well as commemorating the six men whose lives ended in this tragic act of Islamophobic violence that shocked the nation, January 29 will represent an opportunity for Torontonians to reflect on the phenomenon of Islamophobia, and consider fellow Canadians for whom Islamophobia and Islamophobic violence are a daily reality. Finally, it will be a day on which communities can work towards concrete actions to eliminate Islamophobia and Islamophobic violence in our City.

This Motion further calls on the Provincial and Federal governments to designate January 29 as a Day of Remembrance and Action on Islamophobia. In so doing, City Council will join the National Council of Canadian Muslims, which has already made the request of the Federal Government.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM36.5