

May 12, 2019

Toronto City Council
 City of Toronto
 100 Queen St. W
 Toronto ON M5H 2N2

Re: Hate-Sponsored Rallies EX5.3

Dear Mr. Mayor and Honourable City Councilors,

The Canadian Arab Federation would like to express a grave concern regarding the item "Hate-sponsored rallies" under consideration by the Council.

Of course, every decent Canadian and residents of Toronto want to curtail events advocating hatred or violence against any faith, race, or sexual orientation. Racism or any other form of hatred is abhorrent. We in the Arab and Muslim communities know firsthand the damaging effects of hate.

Our concern is the expansion and the unreasonable application of the term "hate-sponsored rally" to events which are legitimate protest of policies and actions of states or countries which prejudice, dispossess or do harm to civilians under their control or use violence outside their borders as in bombings or military invasions or economic sanctions.

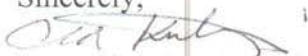
Would the council want to include under the "hate" heading rallies by Tamil or Ukrainian heritage communities against policies and actions undertaken by governments or states to oppress them? Or by Muslims and others protesting the ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya by Myanmar? Or protests against Saudi Arabia's treatment of prisoners or dissidents? Clearly these should not be considered "hate-sponsored rallies." Clearly and unequivocally, such private actions and public events are protected as freedoms of expression and assembly under Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Therefore, in order for this motion to be transparent and complete and not be abused, we request that the following clause be inserted into the motion:

Rallies or assemblies which protest against a country's or and jurisdiction's state policy or actions against a civilian population is not considered a "hate-sponsored rally."

Thank you for consideration in this matter and we have every expectation that the Council will balance the need to combat "hate" with the rights of Canadians to protest unjust action and violence against civilians wherever it occurs in the world.

Sincerely,



Dr. Atif Kubursi, Professor Emeritus, McMaster University
 and Former Acting Undersecretary General of the United Nations

Chair, Board of Trustees, Canadian Arab Federation