



March 24, 2026

Toronto City Council
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Re: Support for Motion MM39.43 – Raising of the Lion and Sun Flag in Solidarity with Iranian-Canadians

Dear Members of Council,

I am writing to express my strong support for Motion MM39.43 regarding the ceremonial raising of the Lion and Sun flag in recognition of the Iranian-Canadian community.

My name is Pouria Afkhami, and I am a journalist, as well as the Founder and Editor-in-Chief of *The Little Iran*, a media platform focused on the Iranian-Canadian community. Through my work, I am in constant contact with thousands of Iranian-Canadians across Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area, and I have witnessed firsthand the importance of identity, dignity, and recognition within our community.

The Lion and Sun is not a political symbol tied to any single government or era. It is an ancient and enduring emblem of Iranian civilization, with documented origins dating back centuries—long before modern nation-states. Historical evidence shows its presence as early as the twelfth century, later becoming widely recognized during the Safavid period as part of Iran’s national identity. Its deeper symbolic roots trace back to pre-Islamic Iran, where the lion represented strength and sovereignty, and the sun symbolized light, justice, and continuity. Over time, this emblem evolved into a shared cultural symbol that transcends dynasties, ideologies, and political systems.

For Iranian-Canadians today, the Lion and Sun flag represents heritage, continuity, and a collective aspiration for freedom, human dignity, and democratic values. It has become widely present in peaceful demonstrations and cultural gatherings across Canada, including in Toronto, where the Iranian community has demonstrated an exceptional commitment to civic responsibility, peaceful assembly, and respect for public institutions.

It is also important to clearly state that this symbol is not anti-religious, nor does it stand in opposition to any belief system. Historically and culturally, it has coexisted with diverse



traditions and interpretations within Iranian society. Today, it represents a unifying identity—one that includes individuals of all backgrounds, beliefs, and perspectives.

Toronto is a city built on diversity, inclusion, and respect. The Iranian-Canadian community is an integral part of this fabric, contributing meaningfully across business, academia, culture, and civic life. In times when many members of this community are deeply affected by events impacting their families and loved ones abroad, gestures of recognition from the City carry profound meaning.

The proposed flag-raising is not a geopolitical statement. It is a local, community-centered gesture—one that aligns fully with Toronto's values of inclusion, human dignity, and respect for cultural heritage. It is an opportunity for the City to acknowledge a community that has consistently demonstrated peaceful civic engagement and a strong commitment to Canadian values.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge Members of Council to support Motion MM39.43.

Thank you for your time, your consideration, and your continued dedication to building an inclusive city for all.

Sincerely,

[Pouria Afkhami](#)

Journalist

Founder & Editor-in-Chief, [The Little Iran](#)

Iranian-Canadian Community Member