



Graduate Students' Association

University of Alberta

4 Feb 2022 - The Graduate Students' Association is deeply troubled by a rising tide of Islamophobia within the city (most recently, there are reports of a 1 January 2022 attack against a Muslim woman outside Al Ameen Mosque in Edmonton, but this is far from being the first such report). The GSA condemns these attacks and the Islamophobia that fuels them in the strongest terms.

Multiple incidents of harassment and violence motivated by Islamophobia have been reported in Edmonton in the past two years, and we recognize these incidents as emblematic of rising white nationalist and white supremacist discourse and sentiment across Canada by members of our communities as well as by political leaders. These reported incidents make clear how Muslim women—often Muslim hijabi women—are targeted for acts of violence for no reason other than their perceived vulnerability. These women have been arbitrarily appointed to bear the brunt of Islamophobia and xenophobia rampant in our communities, by perpetrators possessing a staggering level of intolerance and inhumanity.

We live in a multi-cultural society, one whose boundaries transcend the political borders of any one nation, province, or city. We pride ourselves on being members of a community that welcomes multitudes of intersecting identities, and we strongly urge political leaders at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels to ensure the safety of those targeted by xenophobia, and to make clear that this hate has no place in Canada.

By the same token, we recognize that Islamophobia has marred even our University community. Our own friends, colleagues, peers, and mentors have been subject to such discrimination within as well as beyond campus. We will continue to passionately advocate on their behalf and strive towards a campus culture which truly embodies Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion for all. In doing so, we call on the University of Alberta to establish itself as an institution with zero tolerance for Islamophobia, and with the highest regard for ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity. Such an institution should set out to develop a prevention and response framework to ensure Muslim members of our community can continue their work and study in a safe and inclusive environment.

This week our thoughts are with the families of Ibrahima Barry, Mamadou Tanou Barry, Khaled Belkacemi, Aboubaker Thabti, Abdelkrim Hassane, and Azzedine Soufiane whose lives were taken by the perpetrator of the Quebec City mosque shooting on 29 January 2017. Our thoughts are with the survivors of this attack, and their families, as well.

Today, our thoughts and hearts are with the Muslim Edmontonian woman and her young children who were targeted in this most recent heinous incident.

Our thoughts and hearts are with our Muslim brothers and sisters across Canada. We stand with them.

Signed,
The GSA Board and the GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee