

Merci.

545 **Mme MARYSE ALCINDOR, coprésidente :**

Alors, écoutez, il me reste à vous remercier chaleureusement pour votre présentation et vos réponses et puis je vous souhaite une bonne fin de soirée si vous restez avec nous.

550 **Mme ÈVE-MARIE LACASSE :**

Merci à vous.

Mme ARIANNE ÉMOND, coprésidente :

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Merci. Je vais maintenant appeler Madame Sarah Abou-Bakr, Conseil national des musulmans canadiens, s'il vous plaît. Bonsoir.

Mme SARAH ABOU-BAKR :

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Donc bonsoir, moi Sarah, avec le Conseil national des musulmans canadiens. Je vais faire ma présentation en anglais, mais je prends les questions en français, je suis parfaitement bilingue. Merci.

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So today, I'll be talking about islamophobia in the city, so the increasing hate crimes in Montreal. So, I'm going to talk a little bit about the National Council of Canadian Muslims. We're an independent non-partisan and non-profit organization and we protect Canadian humans and civil liberties. We challenge discrimination and islamophobia, we try to build mutual understanding and advocate for the public concerns of Canadian muslims. Including the province of Quebec, therefore Montreal as well.

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So we've had a long standing public record on participating on major public inquiries. We've

575 been to the Supreme Court before in instance for Bombardier, aerospace training center case, we work with all levels of government. If we were to give examples in Quebec, we worked with Irana Allalou's case to the Supreme Court and we had a legal challenge, constitutional challenge of Bill 62, that was two years ago and we're doing the legal challenge for Bill 21 right now.

580 And during the charter of value, we also came up with... we published the charter of inclusive community which is a small report that we came up with just to give our opinions and recommendations as well. So, why am I here today? The rise of anti-muslim's crimes is something that is happening world-wide, but it's happening in Canada as well and the city of Montreal is not necessarily immune to it.

585 Although we are a very very diverse city, there is a lot of, you know, mix of cultures, there is a lot of, you, know, multi-faith and le Vivre ensemble is something that is happening a lot in Montreal in comparison to the rest of the province. Anti-muslim's crimes still threatens the value of equality and justice and it's still something that is occurring here in the city.

590 As an organization with a mandate to tackle islamophobia in all its form, we know, when something is first hand islamophobia and we know when it's a... in the case of Montreal, is something that is seriously undeniable and it's a problem.

595 The most recent statistics report that the muslim residents of the province of Quebec represent three percent of the population and is the same case of Montreal. It counts three point seven of muslims in the city which is the second largest muslim population in Canada. So, we're quite a lot here.

600 So today's submission draws attention to how the city of Montreal can address a reported and unreported incidence of islamophobia in the city. The impact of hate and discrimination on our muslim community and the recommendations on how the city of Montreal can be part of the solution.

So, I'll talk about the reported hate crime targeting muslims in the city of Montreal. In the last

605 few years, hate crimes targeting muslims have been and still are at an unacceptable level in the province of Quebec. The increase have also been felt in the city of Montreal. 2017, Statistics Canada reported that hate crimes in the country overall increased by one fifty-one percent, so a 151 % in the country. Ontario and Quebec were the two provinces with the most increase with Quebec alone, an increase of a 185 %.

610 Fast forward to 2019, Montreal police hate crime reveal statistics showing that muslims are the main victims of hate crime in Montreal. So overall the religious hate crimes, 60 % were targeted towards muslims and that's this year. So according to the numbers, we're very... we're starting to get, you know, very worried and it clearly indicates that actions must be taken in order to decrease the number of heinous acts towards our community.

615 Now, let's talk about the crimes that go unreported. So, although the statistics that are quoted above are very frightening, it remains a very unrepresentative of the actual situation. The reason been obviously is that not everybody reports, so these numbers still remain not completely real and does not represent what it actually is.

620 According to the police of Montreal, despite the increase of hateful incident reports, many still most likely go unreported. And there's so many reasons to this: the researchers that are behind the Quebec Human Rights Commission, the report you've probably heard of which is on xenophobia and notably islamophobia in Quebec, which by the way, a lot of these examples took place in Montreal, of these islamophobic examples, and the researcher was explaining that many victims don't report because among other reasons they just completely lost trust in the police service and just the system itself. And it's not really surprising giving that there were also statistics from l'Université de Montréal that shows that Montrealers of arab descent, are as twice as likely to be stopped by the police.

630 That's the same thing for black and indigenous people that are four to five more likely to be stopped as well. And I'm talking about people of arab descent and people, you know, of color because there's always the idea of intersectionality that comes to place. A lot of people are being

mistaken for muslims when they're not and a lot of people are, you know, visibly muslims. So, intersectionality always comes in place and it decrease as well the rest of hateful acts towards oppressive.

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So, we also know, at the National Council of Canadian Muslims the barriers of reporting. I'm the Quebec advocacy coordinator, I'm their only employee in Quebec and so, whenever we get reports, I'm the one who gets to speak with these people, I'm the one who gets to accompany them to the police station, I'm the one who gets to speak to them. Sometimes, it takes so much effort for us just to get them to go to the police station.

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And when we go there and we see that they don't deserve or they don't... they're not received with empathy or with a really really good treatment, we understand why it's very hard for them to report. I mean, I've seen it more than once with my own eyes. Sometimes, you just have to push authorities to do something. And it's very discouraging.

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So often, other reasons why they don't report, it's because that they do not know that they can report, they don't know that it's a right and they it's not going to matter. So, many hateful ascendants are also very difficult to report because they're just... like you can't rely identify them. Like, if you're sitting at the bus station, for example, public transport or you're just walking outside and you're just, you know, you're victim of hateful act, there's no way for you to really report it or to really prove it, so it makes it a little bit more difficult. So a lot of things are hidden behind anonymity, cyberbullying, the same thing. Sometimes, people don't that they can report cyberbullying.

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So this have increase a layer of invisibility in the city where the true extend of hate crime and islamophobic incidents remains very unknown, but that doesn't mean that we should ignore it. So, our recommendations: we came up with three recommendations.

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We know that a lot of our colleagues have addressed them as well in the previous presentation, but the first thing is to address barriers to reporting hate incidents and crimes. So conduct a full and independent review of Montreal police service to assess the effective handling of

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665 reported the hate incidents and crimes included but not limited to a review of intake procedures of report from the public and the hate crimes and incident unit, and I would add to this also just, you know, people need to know how to report. A lot of the newcomers, a lot of the immigrants, a lot of... the people that are not familiar with system don't know how to report. So it would be much easier if the city would into place some system to make it easier for people to do these things.

670 Eradicate or eliminate street harassment. Employ a whole government approach to handling street harassment by striking a special a cross functional comity for the purpose of identifying initiatives that can be employed to reduce or eradicate street harassment. And our third recommendation is eliminate the practice of racial profiling which we think is... could be the most difficult and the most heavier but it's the most important as well.

675 In order to build a solid foundation of trust with all members of the public regardless of their race or religion, the SPVM should undergo a diversity and inclusion audit with the mandate to identify why racial profiling continues to be a problem. So we want to take a look at... it's something that's been discussed a lot over the years. We know that there's the strategic plan taking place « Écoutez, comprendre et agir » with the SPVM, but just also like focus on trying to understand why it's still a problem for it to become part of the solution. So...

680 **Mme MARYSE ALCINDOR, coprésidente :**

This is it.

685 **Mme SARAH ABOU-BAKR :**

Yes, I'm opened to questions, french and english.

690 **Mme ARIANNE ÉMOND, coprésidente :**

695 Ok, merci beaucoup pour de nous avoir rappelé ces chiffres que nous connaissons bien sûr. Écoutez, peut-être que je vais... comme j'ai souvent l'occasion de poser des questions est-ce que mes collègues... Oui, Judy? Oui, go, just go.

Mme JUDY GOLD, commissaire :

700 Tout de suite? Oui? Thank you very much for your presentation.

Mme SARAH ABOU-BAKR :

Thank you.

705 **Mme JUDY GOLD, commissaire :**

710 You mentioned people don't know how to report hate crimes and you receive call for hate crimes, you accompany I guess the people that ?. Do you go to the individual police stations or do you go to the straight to the hate crime unit? What is the method that one should use to report?

Mme SARAH ABOU-BAKR :

We go to the individual police stations. We go to...

715 **Mme JUDY GOLD, commissaire :**

You're going to the individual police station? And then, in theory, they would report it to the hate crime unit is that...

720 **Mme SARAH ABOU-BAKR :**

725 Yes, so to be able to report to the... we always send to go first to the individual police stations, we accompany them, we fill out the form, we always ask for the file number, we always ask what they're planning to do and we always keep follow-ups with the police station. Obviously, like when... because we're not the complainant, we're not allowed to call and ask what happens with the case, but we always encourage the people that we've accompanied to keep track and if ever we see that there's no improvement, we go to the hate crime unit after.

730 But we always try to start from... the procedures from the beginning because sometimes there are accidents that can happen or they're all like, you know, incidents that can happen that we might think it's hate crime but then the police might think otherwise, so we always go to the individual police station first.

735 **Mme JUDY GOLD, commissaire :**

Do you accompany your... the people who are victims of hate crimes to the Humans Rights Commission?

740 **Mme SARAH ABOU-BAKR :**

745 We help them through the process. So, we always help... we show them how to fill in the application and do all these things, and we never leave them. We really really never leave them on their own especially when we know that sometimes they might get discouraged, and sometimes, they might just not know where to go to after. It's really really important.

Mme JUDY GOLD, commissaire :

750 Thank you.

Mme MARYSE ALCINDOR, coprésidente :

Une autre question?

755 **M. JEAN-FRANÇOIS THUOT, commissaire :**

Oui. Bonjour.

760 **Mme SARAH ABOU-BAKR :**

Bonjour.

M. JEAN-FRANÇOIS THUOT, commissaire :

765 J'aimerais aborder une question que vous n'avez pas encore abordée. C'est celle des lieux de culte.

Mme SARAH ABOU-BAKR :

770 Oui.

M. JEAN-FRANÇOIS THUOT, commissaire :

775 Parce que c'est un aspect que nous examinons, entre autres choses. Est-ce que, ma première question, est-ce que dans votre expérience, celle de votre organisation, c'est un aspect qui a été soulevé, examiné, étudié, surtout dans la perspective de Montréal et à la lumière de l'expérience de votre organisme, que ce soit à Montréal ou dans d'autres Villes canadiennes?

780 Est-ce qu'il y a des conseils ou des pratiques que vous pourriez faire à la Ville pour gérer, de la façon la plus sereine possible, ce dossier-là qui est parfois... qui amène parfois des tensions?

Mme SARAH ABOU-BAKR :

785 On avait... enfin, « on avait », on a encore un guide pour les lieux de culte, pour qu'ils soient sécurisés si jamais il y a quelque chose qui arrive dans les lieux de culte, comment le faire, où s'adresser. Bien sûr, à chaque fois qu'il y a quelque chose qui arrive à Montréal à Québec ou dans tout le Canada, on est tout le temps là, on va dans les lieux. Si c'est quelque chose, par exemple, comme la Ville de... qui s'est passé à la Ville de Québec en janvier, on va se déplacer jusque là-bas pour nous assurer que les procédures sont faites correctement.

790 Je dirais qu'à Montréal, moi je suis quelqu'un qui est born and raised in Montreal, donc je ne suis jamais vraiment sortie de Montréal, je visite souvent les lieux de culte. Je dirais que c'est sécuritaire, mais il y a tout le temps des petits incidents ici et là. Tu sais, par exemple, du porc qui va être jeté ou, tu sais, du vandalisme des fois, des graffitis.

795 C'est sûr qu'une des choses que la Ville peut faire, c'est vraiment raise awareness, vraiment, je pense que tout ce qui est intercultural exchanges, get people to know about different religion that are, you know, practiced in the city. C'est sûr que si on va, on élimine l'ignorance et puis on met en place des initiatives qui sont très interactives entre les cultures et entre les religions, ça va faciliter la procédure.

800 Puis c'est sûr aussi, tu sais, les municipalités, de rencontrer les mosquées, rencontrer les centres communautaires, aller voir qu'est-ce qui se passe là-bas, demander qu'est-ce que vous avez besoin, c'est quelque chose que les lieux de culte font aussi. Par exemple, moi, je suis vraiment à Cartierville-Saint-Laurent, il y a toujours tout le temps des échanges avec les municipalités et les mosquées, par exemple.

805 Mais c'est des relations qu'on chercherait à bâtir et à maintenir. Donc, tu sais, je pense que ce serait la meilleure façon de savoir ce serait quoi le manque qu'il y aurait dans ces communautés-là. Est-ce que ça répond à votre question?

810 **M. JEAN-FRANÇOIS THUOT, commissaire :**

815 En partie. Je dirais pour un segment, le segment de la sécurité, mais je pense aussi au volet
répondre aux demandes d'aménagement de nouveaux lieux de culte. Souvent, il y a des
arrondissements où la Ville crée des moratoires. Alors je sais que la Ville peut intervenir en termes
de zonage. Et on se demandait s'il y avait des bonnes pratiques en cette matière pour permettre le
dénouement de certains dossiers parce que dans certains arrondissements, il y a comme une
crispation. Et donc au-delà de la bonne entente et de la sécurité, quand arrive le temps de zoner, il
y a souvent des pratiques qui peuvent être contre-productives plutôt que d'autres, alors je me
demandais si vous aviez observé des bonnes pratiques en cette matière, à Montréal ou ailleurs.

820 **Mme SARAH ABOU-BAKR :**

Ce n'est pas quelque chose que moi, j'ai fait personnellement, mais c'est sûr que c'est
quelque chose qu'on pourrait tout le temps partager plus tard, je suis désolée.

825 **M. JEAN-FRANÇOIS THUOT, commissaire :**

Il n'y a pas de problème.

830 **Mme ARIANNE ÉMOND, coprésidente :**

Oui, Habib?

835 **M. HABIB EL-HAGE, commissaire :**

Merci pour votre présentation. En lien avec les chiffres reliés aux crimes haineux ou à
l'islamophobie, est-ce que vous avez... d'où proviennent vos chiffres? Est-ce que les chiffres...
vous comptez seulement sur des chiffres de la police ou il y a d'autres chiffres que vous croisez
aussi?

840 **Mme SARAH ABOU-BAKR :**

C'est des Statistiques Canada, SPVM et puis le Human Rights Commission, la recherche en septembre qu'ils ont dévoilée, le rapport de recherche qu'ils ont fait sur la xénophobie, islamophobie.

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M. HABIB EL-HAGE, commissaire :

Donc les chiffres de la police ne sont pas suffisants?

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Mme SARAH ABOU-BAKR :

Ce n'est pas qu'ils ne sont pas suffisants, c'est juste les autres sources sont complémentaires. Il y a des chiffres qui proviennent de la police, mais il y a d'autres chiffres qui je n'ai pas pu trouver chez le SPVM, il a fallu que j'aie les chercher ailleurs. C'est juste un complémentaire.

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M. HABIB EL-HAGE, commissaire :

Ok, merci.

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Mme ARIANNE ÉMOND, coprésidente :

Parfait. Bien, merci beaucoup, madame Abou-Bakr de votre intervention.

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Mme SARAH ABOU-BAKR :

Merci à vous. Merci, bonne soirée.

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Mme MARYSE ALCINDOR, coprésidente :

Bonne soirée. Je voudrais savoir si monsieur Julien Feldman est arrivé? Alors, nous allons