



For immediate release

Statement of the Parliamentary Black Caucus Regarding the Ongoing Protest in Ottawa

Ottawa, February 4th, 2022—

We are disturbed and alarmed by the protests of the past days in Ottawa and Gatineau. The “Freedom Convoy” protest became an opportunity for White supremacists and others with extreme and disturbing views to parade their odious views in public. Some protestors brought symbols such as the swastika or the Confederate flag onto Parliament Hill and into neighbourhoods in the national capital region. Indigenous culture was caricatured and appropriated, monuments to Canadian heroes were desecrated, and businesses, employees, and volunteers were harassed and intimidated. This is unacceptable. These displays of hatred and violence offend Canadians and have no place in our country.

We strongly support the right of Canadians to protest. Regrettably, we believe that this protest became a venue for extremist elements to intimidate Members of Parliament, Senators, and the residents of Ottawa and Gatineau. We believe this because of the reported links between senior leaders of this protest and extremist organizations, as well as their stated objectives to use this protest to overthrow Canada’s democratically elected federal government through undemocratic means.

In light of these circumstances, the Parliamentary Black Caucus calls upon its parliamentary colleagues to proceed with the following:

1. Prohibit the public display of the Confederate flag and the swastika, symbols of hate and terror.

We believe these symbols have no place in our public spaces and must be banned from public display. Both symbols represent two of the most devastatingly evil and violent eras in human history. There is no reasonable purpose for the display of such symbols in the public square, where they are used to intimidate those for whom they serve as a reminder of oppression, torture, and death. Canada and its people must continually reject these symbols. We ask for the Government of Canada’s leadership in ending the use of hateful symbols in public.



2. Disclose to the Financial Transactions and Report Analysis Centre of Canada (FINTRAC) and the police information related to donations made through public fundraising sites.

Money laundering and financial terrorisms are threats to Canada's security and the well-being of its communities. We are concerned that many of the sites used for fundraising activities lack sufficient oversight and could be venues to divert monies for illegal purposes. This protest raised significant sums online with neither transparency nor accountability. The Parliamentary Black Caucus is concerned that these funds could be used to support illicit activities, including domestic White supremacist terrorism. We propose that the Government of Canada strengthen the oversight of these websites by bringing forward changes to the rules governing FINTRAC and financial institutions in order to heighten the safety and security of all Canadians.

3. Conduct a joint parliamentary study and review of the events surrounding the "Freedom Convoy".

Parliament must conduct a fulsome examination of the events of the past week, including the role of the various police and intelligence services. We believe Parliament would benefit from examining these issues and understanding the changes that are needed for future events to ensure safety around the parliamentary precinct and to uphold the privilege of Parliamentarians at all times.

It is our hope that these protests conclude soon, or continue in a respectful, peaceful, and lawful manner. We thank our security forces and we stand in solidarity with those in the national capital region who face harassment, violence, and unwarranted disruptions to their everyday lives. We call on the Government of Canada to implement our recommendations immediately and we urge all parliamentarians to unequivocally, actively, and specifically denounce hatred and violence in all its forms.



This statement is signed by the following core members of the Parliamentary Black Caucus and their allies in Parliament.

The Honourable **Wanda Thomas Bernard**, Senator

The Honourable **Bernadette Clement**, Senator

Michael Coteau, M.P.

The Honourable **Greg Fergus**, P.C., M.P., Co-Chair of the Parliamentary Black Caucus

The Honourable **Hedy Fry**, P.C., M.P.

The Honourable **Amina Gerba**, Senator

Matthew Green, M.P.

The Honourable **Ahmed Hussen**, P.C., M.P.

The Honourable **Marci Ien**, P.C., M.P.

Arielle Kayabaga, M.P.

The Honourable **Marie-Françoise Mégie**, Senator

The Honourable **Rosemary Moodie**, Senator, Co-Chair of the Parliamentary Black Caucus

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