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## Anti-Racism Groups Condemn Alarming Rise of Hate Crimes Following Paris and Beirut Attacks

**(TORONTO, November 19, 2015)**—Anti-racism groups condemned the alarming rise in hate crimes across the country in recent days, and called on Canadians to stand together against hatred and violence here at home.

“Canada is strong because of our diverse traditions and our acceptance of difference,” said CAF Acting President Mohamed Boudjenane. “The hate crimes we’ve seen are rooted in the same hatred and violence that drove those who perpetrated the Paris and Beirut attacks. Embracing that same violence and hatred here at home only serves to hand the terrorist perpetrators a victory.”

Since Friday’s attacks in Paris, Peterborough’s only mosque was set ablaze and severely damaged; the windows of a Hindu Temple in Kitchener were smashed; and a Muslim woman was attacked by two men screaming racist obscenities in front of her children’s school.

“A hate crime is one of the most vile types of crime, because it is an attack upon identity and community,” said Margaret Parsons, Executive Director of the African-Canadian Legal Clinic. “Immigrants, refugees, and people of all ethnicities and faiths are part of our Canadian community. They have a right to feel safe. We call on law enforcement to investigate these crimes and punish the perpetrators to the full extent of the law.”

Contrary to what some believe, most victims of violent extremism in recent years have been Muslims from Iraq and Syria. Entire families are now risking their lives to escape. The new Liberal government had promised to settle 25,000 Syrian refugees in Canada by the end of the year.

“Refugees are fleeing Syria to get away from the same people responsible for the attacks in Paris and Beirut,” said Debbie Douglas, Executive Director of OCASI - Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants. “They desperately need our help. We cannot allow a group whose ideology is hatred to affect our generosity as Canadians, or our new government’s commitment to help settle Syrian refugees.”



**About the Canadian Arab Federation:**

Established in 1967, the Canadian Arab Federation is a national, non-partisan, non-profit and membership based organization. CAF represents Canadian Arabs on issues relating to public policy.

**About the African-Canadian Legal Clinic:**

Established in 1994, the African Canadian Legal Clinic is a not-for-profit organization. The ACLC's mandate is to address systemic discrimination and anti-Black racism in all areas of society.

**About OCASI - Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants:**

Established in 1978, OCASI is the collective voice of Ontario's immigrant and refugee-serving sector working to achieve equality, access and full participation for immigrants and refugees in every aspect of Canadian life.

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