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The Right Honorable Prime Minister Justin Trudeau
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Subject: Urgent Appeal for Canadian Government to Address Human Rights Abuses in India

Dear Prime Minister Justin Trudeau,

We, the undersigned Canadian civil society, human rights, and faith community organizations, are writing to express our deep concern regarding the escalating human rights abuses taking place in India under the ruling Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The BJP government has fostered a climate of extreme marginalization, hostility and hatred. According to human rights groups, BJP supporters commit violent targeted attacks against religious minority groups with little to no accountability. As individuals and organizations dedicated to upholding Canada's international legal obligations and human rights globally, we urge the Prime Minister's Office to address the pressing issues outlined below and take diplomatic measures in response to the systematic discrimination and violence inflicted upon vulnerable minorities in India.

The BJP's discriminatory agenda, as highlighted in the latest [country report](#) by Human Rights Watch, is profoundly troubling and starkly contrasts the human rights principles that Canada had pledged when announcing the Indo-Pacific Strategy Agreement. This discriminatory agenda finds its roots in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a nationalist paramilitary organization founded in 1925, which serves as the ideological parent of the BJP. The RSS promotes the notion of a Hindu nation, viewing Hindus as the sole "true" Indians and propagating an exclusionary ideology that marginalizes religious minorities, including Muslims, Christians, Dalits, Sikhs, and Adivasi Indigenous peoples. This ideology, called "Hindutva", treats non-Hindus, particularly India's 220 million Muslims, as outsiders who must be monitored, deprived of rights, and even expelled or eliminated.

The BJP's implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in 2019 is [a blatant example of a discriminatory law](#) offering a path to Indian citizenship for non-Muslim migrants from neighbouring countries while excluding Muslims. The UN notably characterized it as a '[fundamentally discriminatory law](#)'. The National Register of Citizens (NRC), a precursor to the CAA, was implemented in the state of Assam. The outcome of this exercise revealed that out of a total of 1.9 million individuals lacking proper documentation, a higher number of Hindu migrants were identified compared to Muslim migrants. With the introduction of CAA, Hindus are able to claim citizenship while [Muslims are excluded](#), facing the risk of being put in detention camps and being rendered stateless. Moreover, the ongoing plight of [40,000 Rohingya Muslim refugees](#) across India, who also face the looming threat of deportation for the same reason, serves as a chilling reminder of the BJP's troubling Hinduization of India's policies and their consequences.

Genocide Watch has issued multiple [genocide alerts](#) for Indian Muslim minorities, including those in [Assam](#). Specifically, Genocide Watch has drawn attention to the surge of mob-lynchings targeting Muslims as well as the [incitement to mass violence](#) against Muslims made by influential Indian leaders,

including through the proliferation of [anti-Muslim propaganda](#) airing across media outlets and channels funded mainly by the BJP.

The genocide-prevention organization has also highlighted human rights violations faced by [Kashmiri Muslims](#), such as killings, mass graves, enforced disappearances, and arbitrary detentions, with little to no [accountability](#). Of great concern is the BJP's intensified restrictions and efforts to silence civil society activists, journalists, and human rights defenders who expose and criticize government abuses across India and Indian-administered Kashmir, resulting in an environment of fear and repression. The BJP's continued abuse of foreign funding regulations and false allegations of financial irregularities to harass rights groups and political opponents undermines the vital work of Indian civil society and its Constitution, originally founded on principles of democracy and pluralism. According to [Reporters Without Borders](#), India's rank on the World Press Freedom Index has dropped from 150 to 161 out of 200 countries. Politically motivated criminal charges, arbitrary detention, [draconian legislation](#) such as the Unlawful Prevention Activities Act (UAPA), and deceitful "terrorism" allegations, are being used as tools to jail innocent people who dare to speak out. Considering that several globally renowned journalists and human rights advocates are in arbitrary detention, it is clear that more needs to be done to protect individuals' right to dissent and express criticism of India's government.

There are also serious concerns about the current proliferation of RSS groups in Canada. The RSS, known for its ultranationalist ideology whose founders took [direct inspiration](#) from Hitler's Nazi ideology, has been actively spreading its hateful agenda through [Canadian schools](#), [online platforms](#), and [various institutions](#), including among the Indian diaspora; a [major report](#) published by the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM) and the World Sikh Organization documents the RSS movement in India and its extensive reach in Canada.

This presence of far-right groups in Canada promotes an exclusionary and discriminatory ideology that undermines Canada's principles of inclusivity and diversity. RSS groups should be banned under Canada's hate speech laws, due to the safety and discrimination issues they pose for Canadian Muslims and Indo-Canadians. This ideology fuels a climate of hostility and animosity, leading to violence and widespread denigration of Muslims. Allowing these groups to operate in Canada not only endangers the safety of Canadian Muslims but also contradicts the fundamental values of equality and respect for all individuals, regardless of their religious background. Canada must take a firm stance against such discriminatory and divisive ideologies to ensure the safety and well-being of its citizens.

To date, these grave human rights concerns have not been publicly addressed in Canada's diplomatic and trade relations with the BJP government. The Canadian government has a legal and moral responsibility to raise its voice and urge the BJP government to uphold its international obligations and protect the rights of all its citizens.

We, the undersigned, demand that the Government of Canada takes the following actions;

- A categorical public condemnation of the systematic discrimination, [genocide incitement](#), harassment, and violence faced by religious and other minorities in India, including Muslims, Christians, Dalits, Adivasi Indigenous peoples, and Sikhs, as well as Kashmiris. This condemnation should emphasize the urgent need for the Indian government to take concrete actions to protect the rights of these marginalized communities and hold perpetrators of violence accountable.
- Ensuring that Canadian trade and investment agreements with India are contingent upon respecting human rights and protecting vulnerable communities. This should include

strengthening oversight mechanisms, consultations with human rights organizations, conducting thorough human rights impact assessments prior to entering into new agreements, and implementing human rights chapters in the agreements.

- Barring BJP leaders who have publicly called for ethnic cleansing and incited genocidal violence against India's minority population from entering Canada under Section 35 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act.
- Identifying and investigating organizations affiliated and funding the RSS, particularly those operating as charitable organizations in Canada. Any organizations found to be promoting hate speech, discrimination, or violence should be immediately banned and their charitable status revoked.
- Conducting a thorough investigation into the BJP government and its agencies interfering in Canadian politics and institutions, as reported by Canada's national security adviser. This includes monitoring their influence in Canadian institutions and online platforms, and taking appropriate legal measures to counter their divisive and discriminatory agenda.

We will continue holding the Government of Canada accountable until the above mentioned actions are taken. We look forward to your prompt attention to this urgent matter and stand ready to engage with your office to discuss further actions that can be taken to address these pressing human rights concerns.

Sincerely,

Academics for Palestine-Concordia University

Academy for Learning

Al Nadwa Educational Islamic Centre

Anatolia Islamic Center

Ar-Rashaad Centre

ASK Foundation

Assunnah Muslims Association (AMA)

Bosnian Islamic Centre

Canadian Centre For Deen Studies

Canadian Council of Indian Muslims

Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCMW)

Canadian Muslim Civil Liberties Association

Canadian Muslim Research Think Tank

Canadians Against Oppression And Persecution(CAOP)

Canadians in Support of Refugees in Dire Need (CSRDN)

CERAS (Centre sur l'asie du sud)

Critical Diasporic South Asian Feminisms
Danforth Community Center
Downtown (Toronto) Muslim Professional Network
East Turkistan Association of Canada
Friends of Kashmir Canada
Global Peace Alliance BC Society
Guildford Islamic Cultural Center
Halton Islamic Association
Hindus for Human Rights—Canada
ICNA Canada
ICNA SISTERS
India Civil Watch International
Institute for Research of Genocide Canada
International Commission for Dalit Rights
International Council of Indian Muslims
Islamic Community of Oakville
Islamic Foundation of Toronto
Islamic Information & Dawah Centre International
Islamic Social Services Association
Just Peace Advocates/Mouvement Pour Une Paix Juste
Justice For All Canada
Khanz Hospitality
Malton Islamic Center
Masjid al-Farooq Islamic Centre
Masjid Al-Salaam & Education Centre
Masjid Al-Salam
Masjid Omar Bin Al-Khattab
Masjid Ut Taqwa
Mouvement contre le viol et l'inceste
Muslim Association of Canada

Muslim Chaplaincy of London

Muslim Social Services Waterloo Region

Muslims of Dufferin Orangeville

Noor Cultural Centre

Oakville Palestinian Rights Association

Ottawa Muslim Association (OMA)

Outaouais Islamic Centre

People's Health Movement Canada/Mouvement populaire pour la santé au Canada

Progressive Cultural Association Calgary

Punjabi Literary and Cultural Association Winnipeg H3

Quebec Public Interest Research Group (QPIRG) at McGill / Le groupe de recherche d'intérêt public du Québec (GRIP-Q) à McGill

Resource Movement

Rohingya Centre of Canada

Rohingya Human Rights Network

Sailan Muslim Foundation of Canada

SALAM Project

Share 2 care

Siddiqui Law Office — PC

Solidarity Across Borders / Solidarité sans frontières

South Asian Dalit Adivasi Network, Canada (SADAN)

South Asian Diaspora Action Collective (SADAC), Montreal

South Asian Legal Clinic of BC

South Asian Network for Secularism and Democracy (SANSAD)

South Asian Women's Community Centre

Sri Lanka Islamic Foundation

Sustainable Concordia

Tawheed Community Centre

The Ottawa Muslim Women's Organization

The Quebec Public Interest Research Group at Concordia University (QPIRG Concordia)

Think for Actions

United Church of Canada

University of Toronto St.George Muslim Students' Association

University of Waterloo Muslim Students Association

Women of Diverse Origins/Femmes de diverses origines

York Region Muslims

Please consider supporting this cause by adding your name;

ORGANIZATIONAL SIGN-ON here: <https://forms.gle/ky4q8GTC3fYbTYwF7>

INDIVIDUAL Sign-On here: <https://forms.gle/YTAWM9X4sp6CqPX97>