



# LONDON MUSLIM MOSQUE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

7 June 2021

Social and Racial Equity Committee

London Muslim Mosque

### **Statement in Solidarity with Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation**

National Indigenous History Month began in Canada in the midst of grief and mourning for the [two hundred and fifteen children's lives that we now know were lost at Kamloops Residential School](#). Canada's last residential school only just closed in 1996, and the pain that these institutions of torture and genocide caused continue to affect Indigenous communities across the land today. We share in the sorrow that this painful reminder of colonial violence has caused to fall on our Indigenous siblings, and in particular the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation, who have been mourning their “missing” children for decades.

The London Muslim Mosque recognizes, respects, and supports Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc cultural protocols and primary lead as the caretaker of these lost loved ones. As a faith institution, we recognize the rights of Indigenous peoples to practice their own spiritual and religious traditions, customs, and ceremonies, consistent with Article 12:1 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We stand against any and all attempts to prevent Indigenous peoples from engaging in spiritual mourning practices in this time of great sorrow, and against any and all attempts to prevent Indigenous peoples from engaging in their spiritual and religious traditions at any time.

In the wake of over 200 Palestinians killed by Israeli violence last month, we recognize the harm that settler-colonial violence causes across the globe, and the importance of supporting indigenous struggles for justice everywhere. Our struggles are connected, and we stand in solidarity for the right of indigenous peoples to self-determination; and for the right of indigenous peoples to live, heal, thrive, and articulate what kinds of support they need to ensure that justice is achieved.

The Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc First Nation has published a list of concrete ways to support their community as they honour their lost loved ones, which we encourage you to visit [here](#). We respect Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc cultural protocols and their role as primary caretaker of their lost loved ones. Donations can be made by e-transfer to [donations@kib.ca](mailto:donations@kib.ca), which will be used toward the work that is needed for further investigation (scientific and archival) and later memorialize the children (in collaboration with and shaped by TteS members, home communities and families of the children).



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Finally, we want to recognize and support the push by parents and members of local Indigenous communities for [Ryerson Public School to be renamed](#), as Egerton Ryerson, for whom the school was named, played a role in creating Canada's residential school system.