



Atheist Freethinkers

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

AFT Condemns the Attack on Salman Rushdie and Urges the Canadian Parliament to Repudiate Motion M-103

Montreal, 16th August 2022 – *Atheist Freethinkers* (AFT), an association which promotes secularism and supports the rights of atheists, unequivocally denounces the horrific attack on the eminent author Salman Rushdie on 12th August 2022, leaving him with several very serious wounds. The perpetrator is a Shiite extremist, Hadi Matar, who apparently admires the Iranian government. It is obvious that the attack was motivated by the fatwa issued by that government in 1989 against Rushdie for the pseudo-crime of blasphemy against Islam in his novel *The Satanic Verses*.

AFT denounces the cowardice and incongruity of many of our politicians who almost never dare to recognize the threat posed by the spread of that horrible ideology, political Islam. For years, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has been harping on *ad nauseam*, condemning so-called “Islamophobia” as if it were a crime akin to racism. His rhetoric is reprehensible, because it stigmatizes a completely reasonable response to a serious social problem. To fear a religion, especially a religion whose fundamentalist tendencies are as virulent and violent as Islamism, is not only rational: it is prudent, wise and necessary. This has nothing to do with racism. The Prime Minister thus stifles necessary criticism of this ideology. Worse, he risks emboldening fanatics like Matar who violently attack critics like Rushdie who are thus made more vulnerable.

Rushdie himself, who unfortunately knows all too well the danger which Islamist fanaticism represents, wrote in his autobiography *Joseph Anton* that the term “Islamophobia” constitutes a sly reversal of meaning, because it is not the fear which is irrational, but rather the feared religion. Rushdie also points out that a religion is not a race.

AFT therefore urges the Parliament of Canada to repudiate its [motion M-103](#), adopted on 23rd March 2017, which unfairly condemns so-called “Islamophobia” and, even worse, associates it with racism.

In addition, AFT urges those who identify as Muslim to repudiate this attack and any other act of violence committed in the name of Islam. LPA also enjoins such persons to declare their support for freedom of conscience, which implies the rejection of any prohibition or repression of the pseudo-crimes of blasphemy, heresy and apostasy.

AFT stands in solidarity with Salman Rushdie and wishes him a speedy and complete recovery.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

David Rand

Pierre Marchand

Web site: www.atheology.ca

bulletin@atheology.ca

pimar5@me.com