

Report of the Queen's University Muslim Students' Association (QUMSA)

November 27, 2008

Greetings,

Although we, the Muslim students, have been plagued by several incidents of verbal harassment, physical confrontations, and general alienation from (un)enlightened peoples, we would also like to take this opportunity to raise awareness for groups who have been unsuccessful in getting their voices heard, hence our campaign for a hate-free campus. Our main concern is to maintain a safe environment for all our students, many of who are international students, away from their homes and families, as well as our female members who are the even more visible minority on campus. Unfortunately, because we are only a student group and are having a hard time trying to collaborate with other groups and the Queen's Administration, we are not able to even guarantee them that basic Canadian right. By taking small steps like endorsing our campaign, we can show the Queen's Administration and the community at large that there is a great interest in this cause and hopefully instil certain policy changes that will guarantee to all Queen's members their basic, entitled, Campus, Canadian and human rights. Let us take this step together to ensure that Queen's is still considered the leader of post-secondary educational institutes, not just in name.

This is a list of all the anti-Islamic/anti-Muslim-related incidents that have been occurring on campus, as recorded by Queen's Human Rights, Queen's University Muslim Students' Association, Kingston Police, and other concerned organizations:

- November 1, 2008
Four students wearing head-scarves, returning from downtown, were stopped by an individual who harassed them with "F... Terrorists". When confronted for his racial comments, the man became violent and frightened the students. The students were able to leave as one of the man's friends stopped him. The incident is reported to Kingston Police.
- October 31, 2008
A group of female students wearing head-scarves were harassed with comments about their dress by a group of young men. The comments were made in Stauffer Library and repeated when the students left the library. Campus security is in search for the harassers.
- October 30, 2008
QUMSA receives a report from a young international student (17 years) at the school of English who was harassed by an individual shouting racial and sexual taunts. The man kept shouting until the student entered the west campus residence.
- October 28, 2008
The Queens Journal publishes the apology of a Queens' student leader who commented on a picture of two individuals wearing scarves over their heads: "I love your Taliban picture"
- October 25, 2008
A second attempt to break-in to the QUMSA office. The door is completely damaged, and the prayer space is declared closed for maintenance until Friday, October 31.
- October 23, 2008
A female Muslim student carrying her baby was harassed by a car driver.
- October 12, 2008
QUMSA receives a report about a Queens Muslim student who due to repeated verbal taunts "F... Terrorists" quitted his job.
- October 2, 2008
A Muslim female student reports a dreadful harassment by a car driver. The student collapsed when narrating the incident and is still suffering from a severe shock.

- September 29, 2008
QUMSA co-chair (female) is harassed by passers and shouted at "Terrorist".
- September 28, 2008
A (female) QUMSA member is harassed and shouted at by angry drivers at night.
- September 27-28, 2008
For the first time in the past 40 years, QUMSA office (prayer-room) was called closed due to security concerns about the safety of its members.
- September 26, 2008
A disturbing Islamophobia-incident with a faculty member at a parking lot. The faculty was slowly approached by an individual who shouted: "towel-head" and "terrorist".
- September 21, 2008
The QUMSA sign outside the prayer-room is vandalised with hateful comments calling violence against Muslims. The sign said: "Queens Muslim Students Should Die".
- September 20, 2008
QUMSA office is violently broken into, with a loss of over a \$1000, mostly dedicated for charity.
- September 17, 2008
Two female Muslim students were harassed by a car driver calling them "Terrorists".
- February 2008
A recorded incident with verbal harassment including racist stereotyping.
- January 2008
An incident of anti-Islam hate propaganda on campus was recorded.
- November 14, 2007
A Queen's faculty member was physically intimidated and verbally abused with racial taunts by a group of students on campus.
- March 2007
The QUMSA table at the Islamic Awareness Week placed for religious dialog, was filled with hatred messages.
- October 31, 2006
Ramadan Banner set on fire outside the Queens Muslim Students' Association (QUMSA) office, on the eve of Eid al Fitr (Most important Islamic Festival).
- October 2006
Mass hate-mail sent on the Queen's email network enticing hatred against Muslims by calling on members of all religions to "stand firm against Islam [sic] and pray for these evil sinners' enlightenment".
- August 2006
The QUMSA office is broken-in for the second time in less than a year.
- June 2006
A Mechanical Engineering student verbally insulted for having facial hair and taunted as a "Terrorist look-alike".
- June 2006
Drunken students attack a Civil Engineering student by throwing empty beer-bottles on Johnson Street. The student was then harassed for being an Arab and called an "F... Terrorist".
- Fall 2005
A Muslim student denied residence by an off-campus landlord for having a "Muslim-type" name.

In Islam, our two primary sources of knowledge are the Qur'an and the sayings and traditions of the prophet Muhammad (peace and blessing be upon him). We read in the Qur'an in chapter 49, verse 13, "O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise (each other))." As well, the words of the prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) at his last pilgrimage included, "All mankind is from Adam and Eve, an Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over black nor a black has any superiority over white." These words are common knowledge to most Muslims and are indoctrinated in their upbringing through learning from these two primary sources. As well, these are principles that are adhered to by almost every developed nation and recognized as universal human rights. Therefore, as Muslims, in Canada, with this

great opportunity to express ourselves and stand up for not just our rights, but for the rights of others it is our priority *a fortiori* to make this a campaign that strives not just for a Muslim-friendly campus, but also for other minorities who have been through similar or even worse experiences. We, as devout and practicing Muslims, as people from all types of diverse backgrounds with a common cause, and from our basic bond as human beings, are campaigning for a campus that condemns all forms of discrimination. Thank you.