Statement by the President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

This is a time of profound national sadness for all Canadians. The recent acts of violence in Ottawa and Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec, have touched the hearts of many people. We worry that the horror of terrorism is taking root in our soil, so long a land of peace, cooperation, and inter-cultural collaboration.

God's intention for each one of us. However, the many spontaneous acts of mutual care and watchfulness that characterized the past few days are signs that most of us, believers and non-believers, are trying to live out God's will for a fraternal, just and peaceful society.

While the roots of violence are perhaps mysterious, we believe that God's gift of the Incarnation, Passion and Resurrection of his Son Jesus continues to bear fruit in the ongoing history of humanity. We believe it will one day bring about the end to all terrorism, killing and death. Such a hope impels our commitment to working for peace and justice for human beings everywhere.

On behalf of the Bishops, priests, religious and lay Catholics of Canada, I unequivocally state that we are also committed to dialogue with the Muslim communities spread throughout our land. We recognize that violent distortions of Islam are causing misunderstanding and suffering in the world and in Canada for peace-loving Muslims as well as non-Muslim communities.

Openness, trust, and sharing are ever more essential between our faith communities to help build understanding in this challenging environment.

Christians and Muslims share a belief in God's mercy, and it is in that belief that we all raise our voices in prayer: May God welcome into Paradise the innocent victims of all terrorist acts; may their families know consolation and hope; and may we all learn to live in peace and solidarity one with another.

+ Paul-André Durocher Archbishop of Gatineau

President of the Canadian Conference

of Catholic Bishops

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