



Carnage Leads to NZ Gun Ban

The Peterborough Immigration Partnership's Response to the March 15 attack in New Zealand:

On the morning of March 15, 2019, the PIP issued the following press release: We offer our deepest condolences to friends and family of those killed and injured in the mosque attacks of Christchurch, New Zealand.

We wish to offer support to the local Muslim community and collectively re-affirm our commitment to building a broadly inclusive community.

On November 14, 2015, the Peterborough community experienced first-hand the effects of hatred put into action, when our local Masjid Al-Salaam Mosque was set ablaze. The fear and pain that the Muslim community experienced was met with an outpouring of care and comfort by supporters, locally and globally.

In the face of the Christchurch attacks, we urge all communities to rally together in this troubling time to face fear with strength and unity.

In this context, we wish to affirm, as a broad cross-section of organizations and individuals in Peterborough, that our support for the local Muslim community remains strong and true: you are our family, friends and neighbours. You are respected, welcome, and valued in this community that is all of ours together.

The Peterborough Immigration Partnership is a community-based organisation composed of local institutions and agencies, community groups, volunteers, newcomers and residents. Through implementing our Community Immigrant Integration Plan, we are working together to create a community where the meaningful economic, social and cultural integration of newcomers ensures a prosperous and inclusive community for all.

Editor's Notes: Less than a week after this incident, the New Zealand prime minister announced new legislation was being written to ban all semi-automatic weapons similar to those used in the March 15 attack which killed 50 people and wounded dozens of others. The new laws are expected to be in place by April 11 – less than a month after the incident – with a buy-back plan for the banned weapons. It's remarkable that other human carnage incidents have not yielded assault gun-ownership restrictions. For example, the US has more guns than people but still allows these weapons.

One week after the attack in New Zealand, more than 100 people gathered outside of the Masjid Al-Salaam mosque in Peterborough to join hands and provide a peace circle in support and solidarity of the local Muslim community.

Kawartha-Peterborough MP Maryam Monsef, who practices the Muslim faith, called this a "... beautiful show of love and support for our friends and neighbours." She described the scene as idyllic, "... seeing everyone in a circle, holding hands and getting wet from an early spring snow-shower."

March 22nd photo shows part of the peace-circle as it stretched around the front of the Masjid Al-Salaam mosque.

