

## **A Role for Canada in an Uncertain World**

These past ten days have been a time filled with anxiety and terrible sadness for many in our community.

We witnessed the killing of a senior Iranian military official by the United States, and retaliatory missile strikes by Iran - including at a base housing Canadian soldiers. Most tragically, we learned that Ukrainian Air 752 had been shot down, with the loss of 176 passengers, including 57 from Canada - seven of whom called the North Shore home.

You will have read the stories of their lives cut so tragically short. They were husband and wife Daniel Saket and Faye Kazerani, Langara college student Delaram Dadashnejad, doctors and parents Naser Pourshabanoshibi and Firouzeh Madani, and business owner Ayeshe Pourghaderi and her daughter Fatemeh Pasavand, a student at Carson Graham Secondary School. My very, very deepest condolences go out to their families.

Our community and our hearts are shattered by the loss of our friends and neighbors. They touched many lives. They were mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers. They worked in many capacities to enrich our city. They contributed to our community and our country. They helped us in our ongoing mission to build a more vibrant, respectful and peaceful society. They will be greatly missed.

Prime Minister Trudeau has underlined that the Government of Canada is committed to ensuring that the impacted families receive the information and the supports they require during this incredibly difficult time. He stated:

*“On behalf of the Government of Canada, I wish to express my deepest condolences to the families and friends of those who tragically lost their lives. Our communities and our entire country are mourning...Canada will not rest until we get the accountability and justice and closure that the families deserve.”*

These recent events point to the urgent need for engagement to de-escalate tensions in the Middle East, both in the short term and into the future. This is something to which our Government is firmly committed.

Over the past days, Canada has been working with partners in Europe and elsewhere to assist with humanitarian and de-escalation efforts. The Prime Minister has sent a consular service team to assist families on the ground in Iran. He and Foreign Affairs Minister Champagne have been in close communication with several European countries, with the Ukraine and with the Government of Iran, to work to de-escalate tensions and to facilitate the process of identifying remains, reuniting families and pursuing a complete investigation of the crash.

Over the longer term, Canada and other like-minded countries must continue to foster dialogue aimed at creating better and more peaceful pathways for reducing tensions. Such constructive engagement is consistent with the history of Canadian foreign policy post-World War II. Canada's Lester Pearson earned the Nobel Peace Prize for establishing peacekeeping as an integral part of the United Nations mandate.

Canada maintains a respected place in the international community in this regard; our country must remain focused on furthering conversations to try to bridge difficult issues in the international arena in thoughtful, creative and peaceful ways. Recent events have underlined how important such efforts are. We live in uncertain times internationally. I believe - especially now - that continuing and deepening Canada's efforts in the area of international peace and security is something that should be an important and ongoing focus, irrespective of which party is in power.

All MPs – but especially those of us whose ridings are home to large Iranian Canadian populations – are in sympathy and solidarity with Iranian Canadians, and with Canadians generally, during this difficult time. This is a tragedy that has deeply affected all Canadians – regardless of background or region.

Personally, I feel very deeply the sense of shock and profound sadness experienced by many in our community.

Any North Vancouver residents requiring assistance relating to these matters are encouraged to reach out to my office in North Vancouver. My staff and I are committed to providing the support you need at this very difficult time.