

May 5, 2025

Michael S. Kerzner  
Solicitor General of Ontario  
25 Grosvenor Street, 18<sup>th</sup> floor  
Toronto, ON M7A 1Y6  
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**Re: Recommendations of the Inquest into the Death of Soleiman Faqiri**

Dear Solicitor General Kerzner,

I am writing on behalf of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, with the support of thirty-five national and provincial civil society organizations, to request an update on the Ministry of the Solicitor General's specific plans to respond to the recommendations delivered by the jury from the inquest into the death of Soleiman Faqiri. As you know, Mr. Faqiri was an individual with significant mental health conditions who was killed in provincial custody. Over a year has now passed since the completion of the inquest.

As highlighted in CCLA's 2020 letter to the Attorney General of Ontario and Chief Commissioner of the Ontario Provincial Police, Mr. Faqiri was killed in the following disturbing circumstances:

- He was pepper sprayed in the face and was forced into his cell.
- A correctional officer made an emergency call for assistance and between 20 and 30 officers arrived.
- After significant force was used, including further pepper spray, he was left in his cell, handcuffed, with a spit hood over his head.
- He was pronounced dead within a short period of time thereafter.

In reply to prior correspondence from the CCLA on the rise of deaths in custody and need for action, the Ministry highlighted:

The government responds to mandatory inquests called by the Office of the Chief Coroner related to deaths in custody and carefully reviews the important recommendations resulting from these inquests by responding to the Office of the Chief Coroner directly.

The inquest jury ruled that Mr. Faqiri's death was a homicide. We repeat the call of the Faqiri family for the Government of Ontario to apologize for Soleiman Faqiri's death. The use of pepper spray, significant force, and excessive restraints by correctional officers against Mr. Faqiri was unjustified.

In May 2024, five months after the jury inquest, the Ministry noted that it was reviewing the inquest's recommendations and how to respond. Among its 57 recommendations, the jury



recommended that a provincial implementation committee be dedicated to ensuring the recommendations from the inquest are comprehensively considered and any responses are fully reported and published. To our knowledge, such a committee has not been created.

The jury also echoed the long-standing call for Ontario to create a provincial corrections inspectorate, a step contained in the *Correctional Services Transformation Act*, which has not yet been called into force, despite being passed in 2018.

Individuals living with significant mental health conditions in custody are some of the most vulnerable people in our province. We look forward to receiving your reply on the specific plans to respond to the recommendations from the inquest into the death of Mr. Faqiri.

Sincerely,

Shakir Rahim  
Director, Criminal Justice Program  
Canadian Civil Liberties Association

cc Douglas Downey, Attorney General of Ontario  
cc Sylvia Jones, Minister of Health

*The organizations and individuals below are signatories to this letter.*

Khaled Al-Qazzaz  
Executive Director  
Canadian Muslim Public Affairs Council  
(CMPAC)

Ken D. Porter  
National Project Director  
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Farhat Rehman, Co-Founder  
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(M.O.M.S)

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