



# Community Equity Council

## Media Release

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October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020

“Abdirahman Abdi, a 37-year-old Black man, died following a confrontation with Ottawa Police on July 24, 2016.” (CBC, October 20, 2020)

Const. Daniel Monstson was found not guilty in his death today.

This is a very sad day for a family in our community, for the Somali and Black community and for the broader Ottawa community. From the tragedy of Abdi’s death four years ago there remains for many in the community the sense of no resolution and no justice.

A victory in the legal system is not justice for many Ottawa community members. Keep the focus on the tragedy of what happened – a family lost a son and brother four years ago.

As the CEC our focus has to remain on “how do we prevent this situation again?” We start from the belief that the reasonable use of force can never legitimize a death in the community by the police.

Given the same set of circumstances we have to have a different outcome. That outcome will only be different if we address what is underlying the relationship that has been established between the police and racialized and Indigenous communities in Canada.

The finding by the court that the use of force in this instance was reasonable shows that there is no understanding of systemic racism. We have to start having conversations from that context. We have to talk about the broader systemic biases that are in our society.

Something went terribly wrong on July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016 and we do not want to ever forget it. We have heard the verdict and after feeling this profound sense that something is not right, we at the CEC will learn from Abdirahman Abdi’s death. He will not be forgotten. His life mattered.

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