



CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNCIL IN CANADA

Honouring Russian Human Rights and Opposition Leader, Boris Nemtsov, By Renaming Streets in Toronto and Ottawa

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Toronto- The Central and Eastern European Council in Canada, representing the interests of nearly 4 million Canadians of Central and Eastern European heritage, calls on the Mayors of Toronto and Ottawa, and municipal councillors to rename streets after the late Russian pro-democracy opposition leader, Boris Nemtsov.

Boris Nemtsov visited Toronto and Ottawa in February 2012, to remind Canadians that an alternative free and democratic Russia was possible and that the Canadian government could help that cause by providing moral support for Russian pro-democracy activists.

His dedication and commitment to the principles of democracy and human rights, despite relentless efforts by the Putin regime to intimidate and repress him and his colleagues, inspired hope that one day, a peaceful Russia, free and democratic, would emerge as a reliable and trusted partner for Canada and other western nations.

Those hopes were dimmed to the faintest of flickers when Boris Nemtsov was violently assassinated just outside the walls of the Kremlin on February 27, 2015.

Boris Nemtsov followed in the tradition of other great Russian human rights advocates like Andrei Sakharov advocated fearlessly for change that would improve the lives of all Russians. Vladimir Kara-Murza, a close colleague and friend of Boris Nemtsov who has himself been poisoned twice, says that the action of renaming a street is a "symbolic but powerful way to show Putin his crimes will not be forgotten."

Two international cities have already renamed streets in honour of Boris Nemtsov: Washington D.C. and Vilnius.

We call on the cities of Toronto and Ottawa to honour the cause of human rights and democracy by recognizing this great, fallen Russian hero who paid the ultimate price for his relentless advocacy for his people and cause.

Andris Kesteris
President
Central and Eastern European Council
Latvian National Federation in Canada

Marcus Kolga
President
Estonian Central Council

Paul Grod
President
Ukrainian Canadian Congress

Joana Kuras
President Emeritus
Lithuanian-Canadian Community

Wladyslaw Lizon
President
Polish Canadian Congress

Sandor Balla
President
Hungarian Congress

Radmila Locher
President
Czech and Slovak Association in Toronto

Dr. Ruki Kondaj
Honorary President
Albanian Community in Canada

Milos Suchma
President
Czech and Slovak Association of Canada

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For more information:
Marcus Kolga
VP Communications Central and Eastern European Council in Canada
marcuskolga@gmail.com