

## Speech – Parliament Hill, Ottawa

Ladies and gentlemen,

Before I begin, I would like to address the tragic events that occurred in Tumbler Ridge, British Columbia.

Following the devastating school shooting that has shaken that community, our thoughts are with the victims, the injured, their families, and the entire educational community — the teachers, staff, students, and parents whose lives have been profoundly affected.

When violence strikes a school, it strikes at the very heart of society. Schools are meant to be places of learning, safety, and hope. Today, we stand in solidarity with the people of Tumbler Ridge and with all those who are grieving.

Please join me in a brief moment of silence.

*Moment of silence.*

Thank you.

I am truly grateful to be here today, and I want to thank the Tafsik organization for bringing us together for what is not an easy conversation — but a necessary one.

Because what we are discussing today is something many would prefer not to name.

It is uncomfortable.

It is politically sensitive.

It is often misunderstood.

But silence has never solved extremism. It only gives it time.

Let me begin with clarity:

What we are discussing today is **Islamism**, not Islam.

Islam is a religion practiced peacefully by millions of citizens across democracies, including here in Canada. Islamism, however, is a political ideology that instrumentalizes religion in order to gain power and reshape society according to a supremacist vision.

One of the most influential historical expressions of that ideology is the Muslim Brotherhood, founded in Egypt in 1928 by Hassan al-Banna.

Over nearly a century, the Brotherhood developed a strategy that is neither chaotic nor improvised. It is methodical.

Across countries and continents, the same pattern appears:

Influence is built gradually through civil society.

Charities provide legitimacy.

Youth organizations shape identity.

Religious institutions provide authority.

Schools shape worldview.

Political engagement becomes strategic when advantageous.

The language used is often moderate.

The tone is often patient.

The objective, however, remains transformative.

This is precisely why several Arab countries that know the movement from within — Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and most recently Jordan in 2025 — have banned it outright.

These decisions were not impulsive. They were the result of decades of experience and the conclusion that the ideology was incompatible with pluralism, equal citizenship, and state stability.

In Europe, the realization has been slower.

For years, hesitation prevailed. There was fear of conflating Islam with Islamism. There was reluctance to confront organized ideological networks operating within democratic frameworks.

But facts eventually force clarity.

In May 2025, the French Ministry of the Interior released a comprehensive report on political Islam and the Muslim Brotherhood's influence in France. It documented approximately 280 associations operating within the Brotherhood's ideological ecosystem, 139 mosques identified as linked or closely connected, and 21 private schools educating thousands of children associated with this ideological current.

These are not random spaces.

Schools shape the next generation.

Youth networks shape future leadership.

Community organizations build legitimacy locally before influence expands nationally.

This is what the French report described as a strategy of gradual entryism — slow integration into civil society in order to influence norms from within.

Across Europe, debate is now ongoing about whether the Muslim Brotherhood, or elements of its network, should be designated at the European Union level as terrorist entities.

Why does designation matter?

Because designation is not symbolic.

It enables asset freezes.

It restricts financial flows.

It prevents public funding.

It strengthens cross-border intelligence cooperation.

It gives law enforcement stronger legal tools.

Designation is not about suppressing belief.

It is about identifying networks whose strategic objectives conflict with democratic principles.

Now, let us turn to Canada.

Canada does not currently list the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization. There is no formally registered entity under that name.

But ideological ecosystems do not require formal registration to exert influence.

In recent years, Canada has experienced a troubling rise in religion-based hate incidents. Jewish communities, in particular, have faced a disproportionate number of antisemitic incidents relative to their population size.

Here, ideology stops being abstract.

Because antisemitism is not incidental within Islamist intellectual history. From early Brotherhood writings to decades of sermons and rhetoric, Jews have been portrayed not merely as a religious community, but as a conspiratorial force — controlling governments, corrupting societies, obstructing an imagined “Islamic order.”

When this ideology enters Western democracies, it adapts its language. It may rebrand hostility as anti-Zionism. It may change vocabulary. But the underlying narrative — that Jews are a civilizational adversary — often persists.

The consequences are visible.

When Jewish students are held collectively responsible for international conflicts,  
when synagogues require permanent security protection,  
when Jewish Canadians feel unsafe expressing their identity —

that is not spontaneous.

It is the downstream effect of narratives that require an enemy in order to mobilize support.

Today, radicalization spreads faster than ever through digital platforms. Algorithms reward outrage. Simplification replaces nuance. Conspiracy travels faster than correction.

So what does responsible action look like?

It means rejecting false choices.

You can protect Muslims from hatred while confronting Islamist extremism.

You can defend freedom of religion while drawing a firm line against religious supremacism.

You can uphold free speech while refusing to tolerate intimidation or ideological segregation.

Concretely, that means:

Transparency in foreign funding of religious and community organizations.

Oversight of schools and youth programs to prevent indoctrination.

Financial accountability for publicly funded entities.

Cooperation with digital platforms to disrupt extremist propaganda.

Consistent enforcement of laws against hate, harassment, and violence.

And above all, it requires political clarity.

Leaders must be able to say — without hesitation — that Islamism is not pluralism. Religious supremacism is not diversity. Democracy cannot remain neutral toward ideologies that seek to dismantle it.

Europe is learning this slowly.

The Middle East learned it painfully.

The United States has addressed it through financial scrutiny and security measures.

Canada still has the opportunity to act early — calmly, rationally, confidently.

Democracies rarely collapse suddenly.

They erode gradually — through normalization, through silence, through the refusal to name patterns that are visible.

The strongest democracies are not those that avoid difficult conversations.

They are those that confront them early — guided by principle rather than fear.

Not to divide.

Not to stigmatize.

But to preserve the conditions that allow pluralism to survive.

Thank you.