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Air India Tragedy

20th Anniversary

Statements by:

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On behalf of

The Honourable Mobina S.B. Jaffer, Q.C.

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(Unofficial Version)

Air India Tragedy

Commemoration of 20th Anniversary

Hon. Terry M. Mercer: Honourable senators, I rise today on behalf of Senator Jaffer and all members of the South Asian community, to remember the men, women and children who lost their lives in the senseless terrorist attack that occurred 20 years ago. The South Asian community suffered a great tragedy. Thus far, it has mostly suffered on its own.

As our nation mourns these people, I should like to share with you the pain of these families. Twenty years ago they were so shocked by the loss of their loved ones that the families did not know how to carry on living,

much less how to react. Soon enough, these families began looking for answers, and they found few. They found that no one was informing them of the details of the investigation, let alone seeking their input.

Although this atrocious act culminated in a deadly explosion 31,000 feet above the coast of Ireland, its effects have been felt here in Canada. It was here in Canada that those responsible for this premeditated slaughter plotted their attack. It was here in Canada that the bombs were planted. It was here in Canada that thousands of friends and family were left with nothing but their shock, grief and

loss. Nothing can ever bring back the last 20 years. The parents of those children lost on that aircraft will never

see their children grow and prosper, and nothing can bring back the years lost with a husband or a wife, or restore to young men and women the decades of love from a parent who cannot be here.

We have seen those who have lost their loved ones wait for answers. What these people have been waiting for is justice — something they may never see. They have been waiting for our great nation to take action so they can begin to heal.

Honourable senators, all Canadians are equal. The South Asian community has suffered a great tragedy. Their community is our community. Today, I urge all honourable senators to stand up for these families and ask that a further investigation take place so that the families can get answers and all Canadians can learn what happened. Most importantly, we must learn how to prevent such a tragedy from happening again in the future.

On this day we reach out to the families. We say a prayer for their loved ones, and we tell them that together we will insist on justice being served.

Hon. Senators: Hear, hear!