



DEBATES OF THE SENATE

1st SESSION • 43rd PARLIAMENT • VOLUME 151 • NUMBER 5

UKRAINE INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES FLIGHT PS752 TRAGEDY

TRIBUTES

Statement by:

The Honourable Bev Busson

Tuesday, February 4, 2020

THE SENATE

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[*Translation*]

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Hon. Bev Busson: Honourable senators, I rise today to pay tribute to all those who were killed during the tragic attack on an airplane in Iran.

[*English*]

On January 8, 2020, all 176 passengers and crew were killed in a senseless missile attack on a civilian aircraft, Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752. Many were Canadians. All were on their way to Canada.

At least 15 of the deceased had ties to British Columbia. We need to remember each of them: who they were, their dreams and their reality. Their dreams have now been extinguished in this senseless tragedy. I want to honour them by speaking about them briefly in this place.

Soheila Moghaddam worked at the Lion's Gate Travelodge in North Vancouver.

Mehran Abtahi had gone to Iran to meet his wife. After earning his PhD, he joined the University of British Columbia as a post-doctoral research fellow in the department of civil engineering. He had found a good job in Vancouver and was looking forward to starting a new chapter in his life.

Ardalan Hamidi, Niloofar Hamidi and Kamyar Hamidi — all three of these people were from the same family. Mr. Hamidi was an engineer and his wife, Niloofar, graduated in 2018 from UBC with a bachelor in education. Their young 15-year-old son Kamyar was a Grade 10 student at Riverside Secondary School in Port Coquitlam. He loved music and wanted to be a producer when he was older.

Naser Oshibi and his wife Firouzeh Madani — the North Vancouver couple were both award-winning physicians in Iran who worked very hard to have their medical licences recognized here. They leave behind a daughter who is a student in the Lower Mainland.

Delaram Dadashnejad, an Iranian student who was enrolled at Langara College in Vancouver to become a dietician, leaves a sister living in Burnaby.

Roja Omidbakhsh was a student at Gustavson School of Business at the University of Victoria.

Fatemah Pasavand and Ayeshe Pourghaderi — Fatemah was 17 years old and travelling with her mother, Ayeshe. Fatemah was a student at Carson Graham Secondary School in North Vancouver. The family owns a bakery in North Vancouver. They were permanent residents and excited about becoming Canadian citizens.

Hossein (Daniel) Saket and Fatemeh (Faye) Kazerani — Daniel, as he was known, was an engineer with a North Vancouver real estate developer. His wife Faye, as she was known, was an assistant to a cardiologist at St. Paul's Hospital. They were both described as having a zest for life that lit up the room when they entered.

Mohammadhossein Asadi Lari and Zeynab Asadi Lari were siblings in their twenties. Zeynab was enrolled at UBC in biology. Her dream was to become a doctor. Her brother had graduated in 2018 in cellular and anatomical and physiological sciences with honours.

Erica Frank, a professor and chair of research at UBC, was quoted as describing Mohammadhossein's death as "an astonishing and excruciating loss." She went on to state that his death was also "an enormous loss for public health globally."

It is with great sadness that I reflect on these needless and tragic deaths and want to assure them and their families that we shall never forget.

Thank you, *meegwetch*.