

**“INTERNATIONAL BLASPHEMY RIGHTS DAY”**

**WHEREAS** *freedom of speech is an inseparable element of a democratic society; and*

**WHEREAS** *Canada is a nation whose founding principles stand for inclusivity, multiculturalism, and free speech; and*

**WHEREAS** *the Charter of Rights and Freedoms entitles citizens to the fundamental rights and protection of freedom of conscience and religion, freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expressions; and*

**WHEREAS** *currently in some theocratic nations, free speech is met with punishments ranging from detainment to execution; and*

**WHEREAS** *section 296 of Canada’s Criminal Code (blasphemous libel), though latent, violates the fundamental rights of citizens with opinions different than that of the majority;*

**NOW, THEREFORE** *I do hereby proclaim the day September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016 as “**International Blasphemy Rights Day**” in the **CITY OF VICTORIA, CAPITAL CITY** of the **PROVINCE** of **BRITISH COLUMBIA**, the **TRADITIONAL TERRITORIES** of the **ESQUIMALT AND SONGHEES FIRST NATIONS**.*

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, *I hereunto set my hand this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of September, Two Thousand and Sixteen.*

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**LISA HELPS  
MAYOR  
CITY OF VICTORIA  
BRITISH COLUMBIA**

**Sponsored by:  
Ian Bushfield  
BC Humanist Association**