



## RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

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PETITION No.: **421-01047**

BY: **MR. EHSASSI (WILLOWDALE)**

DATE: **DECEMBER 9, 2016**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **THE HONOURABLE JODY WILSON-RAYBOULD**

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Response by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

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SUBJECT

**Blasphemous libel**

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**ORIGINAL TEXT**

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**REPLY**

The government is committed to maintaining a fair, relevant, and accessible justice system for all Canadians.

In her mandate letter, the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada has been asked to conduct a broad review of our criminal justice system. The Minister's overarching goal is to ensure our legislation meets the highest standards of equity, fairness, and respect for the rule of law as well as the Constitution of Canada.

The crime of blasphemous libel, although included in the original *Criminal Code* of 1892, has not been the subject of a reported legal case since 1935. In 1979, a charge of blasphemous libel was laid in Ontario in a case involving the showing of Monty Python's *Life of Brian*, but the charge was stayed.

Blasphemous libel, along with numerous other provisions of the *Criminal Code*, are presently under review by the Minister and her officials. The Minister looks forward to addressing these provisions in the course of her mandate.