

MEDIA RELEASE

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STATEMENT FROM BOARD CHAIR DEANS REGARDING VERDICT IN MONTSION TRIAL

(Ottawa) – With the verdict announced this morning by Justice Robert Kelly, the Ottawa Police Services Board recognizes that the journey does not end today for Mr. Abdirahman Abdi's family. The death of Mr. Abdi was tragic and it sent a wave of anger and hurt through our communities. We will continue to hold them in our thoughts.

This process has been long and painful and has added to an already strained relationship between the community and our Ottawa Police Service members. This Board acknowledges the significant issues we face with public confidence and accountability. Today we recommit ourselves to the work that needs to be done to better serve our citizens and our members. This means making improvements to training and protocols as well as a commitment to reforming how we respond to mental health calls. We have already taken steps to review the culture within the OPS and these steps will help us address systemic issues. We recognize that it is our job to listen and act. Together we must ensure that we all learn from this tragic event and put systems in place to prevent another such tragedy. The Ottawa Police Services Board is fully committed to this goal.

The Board also has a responsibility towards the members of the police service to ensure they have the supports and resources they need to provide exemplary service to our community. We recognize the tragic events of July 24th, 2016 will have a lasting impact on the members involved, as well as their colleagues. We are committed to ensuring our plans for change include our members.

Today's verdict will bring a wide range of emotions. The Ottawa Police Services Board is determined, that through the ongoing healing process, our board and police service will come together with the community to find a collective way forward to address public calls for change in meaningful and tangible ways.

The Ottawa Police Services Board is the civilian body responsible for governing the Ottawa Police Service. It is responsible for the provision of adequate and effective police services to the City of Ottawa's residents.

- 30 -

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