



February 9, 2022

UPDATE RE: FREEDOM CONVAY 2022 - OPERATING WITHIN THE LAW

We would like to extend a heartfelt “Thank-you” to our law enforcement officials working tirelessly to ensure the continued safety of our peaceful demonstrations here in Ottawa. To facilitate the peaceful intent of the demonstration, the convoy organizers are working in close cooperation with multiple levels of security services: the Ontario Provincial Police, the Ottawa Fire Department, and the Parliamentary Protective Services. Organizers have also reached out to the RCMP. On Tuesday February 8th, a trusted source of The Freedom Convoy 2022 confirmed that despite their reasonable refusal of involvement in the peaceful Ottawa demonstrations, the CDS received orders from the PMO to send in military reinforcement on the ground in Ottawa. The Freedom Convoy movement has always been and continues to be a peaceful demonstration within the legal rights of all Canadian citizens. The Freedom Convoy is perplexed by these orders coming from the PMO. We invite Canadians to take a look at the peaceful demonstrations for themselves through the lenses of unbiased media coverage and personal experiences shared by those involved in the demonstrations on the ground to see for themselves that the situation is peaceful, and overwhelmingly joyful. Gail Davidson from Lawyer’s Rights Watch in fact wrote to Mayor Watson and City of Ottawa Councillors requesting some clarification on the basis upon which the State of Emergency had been declared. She wrote:

“Protests are a legal means of bringing issues of public concern to the attention of lawmakers when other means of communication have failed to illicit meaningful responses. Rights to engage in criticism, opposition and dissent through peaceful protests are essential components of democracy that are protected by law. Canadian and international law impose duties on states, including the City of Ottawa, to facilitate peaceful protests and protect protesters from interference by state and non-state actors. Noisy, inconvenient or unwanted protests are protected and must be facilitated. The only protests not protected by law are those where organizers and participants intend to use or engage in violence. The mere possibility of extremists with violent or criminal intentions does not extinguish the rights of others to continue a peaceful protest or entitle state authorities to shut the protest down.”

The Convoy is conducting a lawful protest. A recent court order explicitly supports that statement. The senior judge in this ruling was crystal clear during the hearing that these truckers have a lawful right to be here - a clear right under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to free expression. The court injunction exclusively covered honking, which had been already addressed and halted by truckers regardless of the injunction. We recognize that there is a democratic process under which change occurs, and we have no intention of acting outside the realm of this democratic process. We continue to ask for nothing more than the restoration of our rights and freedoms with respect to mandates and vaccine passports.

We cannot thank the officers on the ground enough for their help so far and we hope that they will continue to work with us as we continue to express ourselves peacefully, respectfully and within the limits of the law.