



The Canadian Press

National News, Sunday, February 4, 2007

## **Muslim groups to file human-rights complaint against Quebec cultural rules**

The Canadian Press

MONTREAL (CP) - Canadian Muslim groups say they will file a complaint with the Quebec Human Rights Commission against the town of Herouville over its widely reported "norms" for prospective immigrants.

The Canadian Islamic Congress and Canadian Muslim Forum announced Sunday they will prepare a joint complaint against a Jan. 25 town council resolution that, among other things, bans the carrying of religious daggers such as Sikh kirpans and the covering of faces other than on Halloween.

Detailing behaviour expected of anyone settling in Herouville "clearly propagates negative stereotypes of Canadian minorities," the groups said in a news release.

They contend the norms violate Section 27 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which calls for preservation and enhancement of Canadians' multicultural heritage.

The standards established by the town of 1,300, northeast of Montreal, advise newcomers, for instance, that women and men are considered equal, that women can drive cars and that it's unacceptable to stone women to death in public, burn them alive or throw acid on them.

"They're quite racist remarks," Imam Zijad Delic, national executive director of the Canadian Islamic Congress, said by telephone from Ottawa.

"They are adding oil on fire for no reason."

The rules characterize minorities as oppressive toward women and violent, he said. And they cite acts that don't even occur in Canada, Delic said.

Herouville councillor Yves Gervais said he wasn't aware of the plan to file a human-rights complaint against the town.

"They're just norms that we established," Gervais said.

But in an appearance on the popular French-language television show *Tout le monde en parle*,

another Herouxville councillor went one step further.

Andre Drouin, who spearheaded the controversial motion, called on Premier Jean Charest to declare an immediate state of emergency in order to "conserve the culture of (our) people."

Drouin told host Guy A. Lepage that Charest should move to eliminate all accommodations made to religious, cultural or ethnic minorities.

Herouxville holds its next town council meeting Monday night.

(Montreal Gazette)

**Category:** News

**Subject(s) - The Canadian Press :** POLITICS; **RELIGION**; SOCIAL

**Hour of publication:** 22:0

**Length:** Short, 285 words

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Doc. : news·20070204·CP·28895

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