

**Witness Statement of: Amina Mohamed**

**No. of statement: 1**

**Exhibits:**

**Date of statement: 27/06/18**

**GRENFELL TOWER PUBLIC INQUIRY**

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**WITNESS STATEMENT OF AMINA MOHAMED**

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I, AMINA MOHAMED, will say as follows:

1. I make this statement about the events of the night of 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017 for the purposes of Phase 1 of the Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry. I wish to make a further statement as part of Phase 2 of the Inquiry.

Background

2. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1971. I work as a CCTV enforcement officer.
3. I lived in flat 51 of Grenfell Tower with my nephew Khalid Ahmed. He has lived with me since he was six years old. We moved into the Tower in January 2014.
4. Flat 51 is on the eighth floor of Grenfell Tower. The Tower was a nice place to live. The people who lived there were very friendly. I knew some of my neighbours and other residents who lived there.

Fire safety

5. I had never heard a fire alarm inside the Tower before 14 June 2017. I don't recall there ever being a fire alarm test or any fire drills. I had never been advised about what to do if there was a fire in my flat or in the Tower.

## Refurbishment

6. I remember that during the refurbishment of Grenfell Tower the council or the TMO told us that they wanted to put a new boiler in each flat and the boiler would be in the hallway by the front doors. The old boilers were by the kitchen. There were residents that were against this, including a resident I know called Ed. There were resident meetings about this and other problems.
7. I want to say more about the refurbishments and the relationship with the council and the TMO. I want to make a further statement in Phase 2 to discuss all these issues, including the aftermath of the fire.

## 14 June

8. On the evening of 13 June 2017 I was at home with Khalid. [REDACTED] I had eaten at around 21:00. I was going to bed. Khalid was awake playing on his PlayStation. I went to my bedroom to sleep. There was nothing unusual that I had noticed that night in the Tower.
9. I was asleep when Khalid suddenly opened the door to my bedroom and shouted, "Wake up, wake up there is a fire". He walked into the living room and I followed him into the room. I saw him look out of the window. He said to me that there was a fire and that we had to move. I didn't look out the window to look at the fire myself.
10. I was wearing a Somali dress. I picked up my Abaya and I took a scarf and a pink jumper as I thought it might be cold outside. They were the first clothes I could find. I took with me my mobile phone and Khalid's keys to the flat which were by the front door. I thought at this time that we would be coming back to the flat that night so I didn't get anything else.
11. We left the flat and walked into the communal area. There had only been a few minutes between Khalid telling me that there was a fire, and us leaving the flat. When we were outside the flat Khalid started knocking on the front doors of people on our floor. He first knocked on number 52 which was the closest door to our own. They

opened the door and he told them that there was a fire. Khalid then started knocking on 53 who did not open their door, and then moved to 54 who did open and again Khalid told them there was a fire. I asked Khalid why he was doing this. I was half asleep at this time. Our neighbours in flat 56 opened their front door and when they did, smoke came out of it. When I saw this I realised that the fire was really serious. I didn't check the time but I know that it was after 1am. When I saw the smoke from flat 56 I realised we had to leave the building quickly. I shouted to Khalid, "Let's go".

12. I would describe the smoke that came out of flat 56 as being black. It was not very thick but it was black and there was a lot of it. I remember that as soon as the door opened I saw the smoke pour out.
13. I was worried that Khalid might go back into our flat, or go upstairs to knock on more people's doors. I shouted at him that we needed to leave now.
14. Our neighbour Willie from flat 52 and his family came out of the flat, as well the people from number 54. Willie was holding his small dog. I saw one resident holding her child.
15. The smoke then grew very quickly. We had not been standing there very long. We were shouting. I couldn't hear any fire alarms going off in people's flats. There were no fire alarms going off in the communal areas.
16. I opened the door to the stairwell. There wasn't any smoke in the stairwell. The light was on and there were not many people on the stairs, I think we were some of the earliest people to leave the Tower.
17. On the way down the stairs we saw the firefighters coming up. I walked down the stairs to the ground floor and left through the main entrance of the Tower with Khalid. The police showed me a photograph of me leaving the stairwell inside the Tower and I think it was timed at 01:24am. I saw more firefighters outside the Tower and fire engines.

#### Outside the Tower

18. Khalid and I and the other people from our floor stood outside the Tower near the Leisure Centre. There were not many people standing with us at this time but more and more people were coming. We looked up at the Tower and this was the first time I saw the fire. I saw that there was a fire up to the top floor on one side of the building and was starting to come around the building. It looked like the whole building was going to go up in flames. The fire had travelled from the bottom to the top of the Tower very quickly.
19. A woman I know called Rashider who lived in the Tower came over to me with her daughter. [REDACTED] She asked me to look after her daughter, and she told me that she was going to try and get into the Tower because her husband was still inside. She was going to try and find him. She said that her husband, who is called Sid Ali, was awake but that he didn't want to leave so she left without him. She said when she got to the bottom she realised how serious the fire was. I know that the police and the fire fighters refused to let her back into the Tower but thankfully Sid Ali did realise that the fire was serious and he managed to escape in time.
20. The police officers were pushing us backwards because of how serious the fire was. I could see people standing in their windows waving their hands and flashing their mobile phones to get attention. I could see people doing this especially on the top floors. At the time I didn't know how the fire was spreading. It was spreading so quickly. Within one hour the whole building was on fire.
21. After this police officers came to where we were standing and they pushed us back to the main road by the leisure centre and closed off the area where we had been standing. After the police had moved us we were far away from the tower and could not see what was happening inside the building.
22. I was completely shocked by what I was watching. Everyone around me was screaming. I remember seeing a girl near me just crying and crying. I asked her what had happened and she told me that she had lost her father inside the Tower. I think he may have got trapped in the lift by what she said. Her sister and mum managed to get out the Tower but he was still inside.

### Impact

23. I don't wish to at this stage go into detail about the impact that this has had on me. It did have an impact on my ability to work and I had to take time off work.

24. I was living in a hotel for several months which was really difficult. I lost my home.

25. I often think about the people who lost their lives and people who lost their loved ones. I once spoke to a survivor at the silent march and he told me that he had been with his wife for 36 years but she died in the Tower. He broke down when he told me this.

### **Statement of truth**

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

I am willing for this statement to form part of the Inquiry's evidence and for my statement to be published on the Inquiry's website.

Signed: AMINA

Dated: 27/06/18