

Witness Statement of: Mohamed Sebbar
No. of statement: 1
Exhibits: 0
Date of statement:

GRENFELL TOWER PUBLIC INQUIRY

WITNESS STATEMENT OF MOHAMED SEBBAR

I, **MOHAMED SEBBAR**, will say as follows: -

1. I would like to thank all the people of the United Kingdom for their support and care for the Grenfell Tower victims, my thanks and appreciation to Mr Jo Maugham QC who helped us to recover our father and put him to rest, my thanks to Mr Paul Ridge and all Bindman's lawyers and every lawyer and solicitor taking part in this inquiry on behalf of Grenfell tower's victim.
2. On the 14th of June 2018 around 1:15 am, my sister called me telling me that The Grenfell Tower was on fire and that our dad still in his flat. It was very shocking news for me, but I was not expecting the fire to be large in scale. I called my son and we drove from [REDACTED] area where we live towards the Tower. As we drove my legs were shaking and I was very worried, I just wanted to get there as soon as possible. The 10/15 minute drive was very long and painful, especially after I received a phone call from my dad asking me where I was, and telling me that there was fire in the building. He was upset, worried and nervous and he said: "those people set fire to us". He was referring to the flat above (Flat 91) because he had so much stress and trouble from that flat in the last couple years before the fire due to water leaks. His flat was flooded, destroying all his furniture and causing him trauma and stress. The TMO dealt with his case very badly and even tried to evacuate him against his wishes, no repair was done to the damage and no replacement of the furniture the photos were provided to KCTMO.

Mohamed Sebbar

3. On our way to Tower I was talking to my dad trying to calm him and to assure him that everything will be ok. I wasn't aware of the scale of the fire at the time. I asked him to leave the building even though I know it is impossible for my dad to escape in this situation without help and support from someone. He doesn't like to use the tower stairs at night time which are normally filthy and with poor lighting.
4. As we approached the tower we could see the smoke from far away. We parked near to the tower on Stoneleigh Street. There were a few ambulances and fire engines in the area. We rushed to the Tower main door. Police were there, and they refused us entry and pushed us away. At that time, I was with my dad on the phone and I told him that we are at the main door and that the police were stopping us from going inside. We tried to explain that my dad needed help to come out to safely. Their reply was that firemen will help him out. We had a great expectation that my father will be safe as the fire hadn't reached his flat and we could see a few firemen around.
5. We ran to the corner of the tower near the leisure centre where we could see my dad's flat. The fire was still far from his flat but it was in many different locations on the tower and we could see fire men on the fire engine's ladder throwing water in some lower flats. It was a great concern for me because I could see the fire spreading from side to side. My dad was still alive, he was coughing, choking, having problems breathing and saying I am dying, and later his voice vanished.
6. More police arrived and pushed us far away from the leisure centre. The fire was spreading very fast and chunks of cladding with fire were being thrown toward us. People were screaming, shouting, crying all around us. Everyone realised that their worst fears were happening, and many residents of the tower were left to face their destination in an inhumane way. British people were burning alive in London in one of the richest boroughs in the UK. Shame on anyone who had a hand in the loss of those innocent people. Shame on anyone who let them down and allowed them to be burned alive.

7. As we watched, the fire reached my dad's living room windows. He was not responding to us. We were shaking and broken hearted. We had no energy, no more hope. We were just sitting and crying because our father will be never with us again.
8. We were in shock and disbelieve, I was asking myself are we in a dream or real life?
9. We stood again, and we went to see if a miracle had happened and my dad was among those who survived somehow. We checked some ambulances and asked firemen but there was no sign of him.
10. The 14th June 2017 was a tragedy for me and my family like no other. It was a trap and death chamber for the innocent people living at Grenfell Tower, and it happened in front of the eyes of hundreds of people around the Tower and millions watching on media around the globe.
11. I witnessed that morning my father losing his life, minute by minute for almost two hours. We were helpless and unable to help him or save him. We were just listening to him fight for his life. He was coughing and wheezing as the smoke and fire grew.
12. There was no proper equipment or strategy to stop the fire. People were left to fight for their own lives and to face death. We were pushed back by the police telling us that the experts were dealing with situation, when in fact the fire turned into a national disaster in one of the best countries in the world in the 21st centuries. A country which is well equipped and has experts to deal and help crises around the world let down her own citizens.

I believe the facts stated in this statement are true.

I am willing for this statement to form part of the evidence before the Inquiry and to be published on the Inquiries website.

Signed... 

Mohammed Sebbar

Dated... 30/06/2018

Mohamed Sebbar