

IN THE MATTER OF THE GRENFELL TOWER INQUIRY

STATEMENT OF YASIN YUSUF ADAM

Preamble

1. This statement is made from my own personal knowledge and from matters that I have been told about by others; where the information does not come from my own personal knowledge I make this clear below.
2. I make this statement because I was a resident at flat number 14 Grenfell Tower at the time of the fire and I witnessed the early stages of the fire spreading and the emergency response.
3. I had direct involvement with a handful of the other Grenfell Tower residents prior to the fire, including those that passed away.
4. I am friends with Hassan, he lost his wife and daughters in the fire. He is from [REDACTED] I used to socialise with him [REDACTED]. He was married to Rania Ibrahim. She died in the fire, along with her daughters. At the time Hassan was in [REDACTED] visiting his brother, [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
5. I also knew Samia (I do not know her surname). I first met her at my friend's wedding and we became friends after that. She died in the fire, along with the rest of her family.
6. I am a Core Participant of the Grenfell Tower inquiry.

Personal background

7. I was born on the [REDACTED]. I am 45 years old. I am employed as a Security guard.
8. I am currently living in temporary accommodation at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I live with my sister, Maryam Adam, her partner Abdulwahab Hassan Abdulhamid and nephew, [REDACTED]
9. I moved in with my sister in March 2009, to look after her, as she was ill. In [REDACTED] 2015, my sister had her [REDACTED] marriage and her partner moved in with us.

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Yasin Yusuf Adam


Dated:

17.05.18

10. At the time of the fire Amna Yusif Mohamed came to stay with us for three weeks, as my sister's partner was going to [REDACTED] visit his relatives, as his sister died.
11. My health prior to the fire was good. I did not have any health problems, mobility issues or breathing problems. I did have problems with my knee for the last five or six years, which is painful, but I have not been diagnosed with any medical condition. I struggled with using stairs.
12. The health of Abdulwahab was good, but Maryam had a few health problems such as a slipped disc and lymphoedema.

Flat number 14 Grenfell Tower

13. The tenancy agreement was between Maryam and Royal Borough Kensington & Chelsea ("RBKC").
14. Our flat had one bedroom, one reception, a kitchen and a bathroom. I stayed in the sitting room, on the sofa bed. It was located on the east side of the building.
15. When I moved in the flat, it was in good condition. Maryam was given everything she asked the council for.
16. Every room had a door, that opened and closed. When the renovation was done, all the doors were changed. There was no draught and our front door was a solid, black door, that had a letterbox and a lock on it. The door automatically closed when opened. The gaps under the door were normal.
17. The main and side entrance had doors that automatically closed when opened. I did not use the door to the stairway on my floor, as I struggled with going down the stairs due to my knee; I always used the lifts, so I am unable to comment on what it was like. The only time I used it was on the night of the fire.
18. We had two windows in our flat; one was in the bedroom and the other was in the living room. Both overlooked Kensington Aldridge Academy, which we called the "school", and Latimer Road train tracks. I could not see the main entrance side of the building. Both windows were double glazed, and you needed to push out the window to leave a gap of 8-10 inches to allow air in. The windows opened upwards, which meant that air and smells would travel upwards, not downwards. When RBKC changed our windows after the renovation, they put material around

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the panes to secure it. I do not know the name, but it was the same material that Maryam used in our flat before to cover a mark. She was told by our housing officer that it was a fire hazard and they told her she had to remove it straightaway.

19. Before the renovation we were on the first floor but after the renovation, we became the fourth floor. They made other floors underneath our flat.
20. The lifts were in good condition, but they did sometimes break down. There were two lifts; when one broke down, the other one was working.
21. I did not cook; Maryam did that, so I do not know about the extractor fans in the kitchen, but we had big windows, so the window would be opened when cooking was done. I did not smell any food smells from the neighbour's flat.
22. My flat was right next to the lift and the stairway, so I did not use the corridor much.
23. When RBKC did the renovation, they changed the bathroom to have disabled facilities, as Maryam has mobility issues.
24. The lighting on the floor landings were okay. The corridors were always clear. We had bin shoots to put our rubbish and bins in, and everyone would use this.
25. Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation ("TMO") were responsible for the maintenance of the building. The condition of the building was very good.
26. We had a community in Grenfell Tower. People of all different backgrounds; Asian, Latino, black, all lived together. I used to see many people in the lift and the communal area.

Fire Safety at Grenfell Tower

27. I was not told about fire safety guidance. There was a poster on the wall by the lift that told us what to do if there was a fire.
28. I do not remember seeing the fire extinguisher.
29. I did not see any fire safety checks being done whilst I was living at Grenfell Tower.

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30. I did not have any concerns regarding the fire safety. After the renovation, the building looked great from the outside.
31. I do not know if there were any sprinklers or fire/smoke alarms in the building, but we did have a smoke alarm in our flat. This would sometimes go off when Maryam cooked.
32. To my knowledge there were no sprinklers in the building. They did not go off during the fire.
33. Before the renovation, most of the residents said they did not want it, but RBKC did it anyway. The renovation was not just for the tower, it was for the surrounding the area. It was the garden, car park and small football ground. Before the fire, there were many exits; after the renovation there was only one exit for vehicles. This was located right of the sports centre, if you walk out of the main entrance.
34. Our flat had both a gas and an electricity supply.

13 June 2017 and the hours leading up to the fire

35. It was the month of Ramadan [REDACTED] Me and Abdulwahab normally go to [REDACTED] but on this night, we stayed home. [REDACTED] We were sat talking about Abdulwahab and watching TV. I did state in my police statement that I was not in the flat when the fire started. I did so because I was not sure if RBKC would be happy that I was staying at the flat and in a panic I stated I was not there. I have never been in this situation before and I was confused. I did not want to cause any problems for Maryam who was the tenant of the property. I therefore said that I was not in the flat on the night of the fire when in fact I was.
36. A couple of nights before the fire, Abdul was supposed to go to [REDACTED] visit his relatives, as his sister had sadly passed away. He went to the airport and was not feeling well, so he did not go, and I picked him to bring him home. He was planning on making his journey again, when he was feeling better.
37. Maryam went to bed early as she was not feeling well. We stayed and watched TV, and then Amna went to bed. I was feeling sleepy; I fell asleep on the sofa. The next thing I remember was that Abdulwahab woke me up.

The Fire: early stages

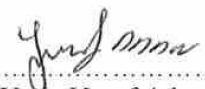
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38. It was about one o'clock, when Abdulwahab woke me up. He said [REDACTED], "it is a fire, it is a fire, c'mon got to go out". I put my slippers on and put jacket on, on top of my pyjamas. I did not take anything else with me. I left my phone. Maryam did not take her phone but Amna and Abdulwahab did. I was in a deep sleep. Abdulwahab said that our neighbour from number 16 said that he had a fire in his kitchen.
39. Maryam kept saying "I'm tired, let me sleep". Abdulwahab then said, "let's go outside, when everything is ok, we will come back inside".

Leaving Grenfell Tower

40. As I came from the flat, we saw the smoke from the burning flat, but it was not that much, and I could see through the smoke. The smoke in the corridor was grey and light. It did not make me cough. The smell was not strong. It smelt more like electric burning, not cooking burning. I could breathe properly. I was a little bit scared at this point.
41. Maryam was pregnant at the time, so we tried to help her and everyone to get out. Abdulwahab and I started knocking on the neighbour's flats to wake them up.
42. We were the first people coming out. I saw Abdulwahab knock on the door of flat number 15. People did not want to open the door. I saw a Somali guy come and speak to Abdulwahab. He told him there was a fire in the flat. He came out from his flat with his wife and children and went ahead of us, as we were walking slowly because of Maryam's pregnancy.
43. I could not hear the alarm go off in the building or our flat.
44. We walked down the stairway. There was only one stairway for the whole building, which was also the fire exit. We did not rush, as we did not think it was that the fire was that serious. I cannot remember if there was smoke in the stairway at this point.
45. I saw the lady from number 16 by the stairway with her luggage. I did not pay much attention to her, as we wanted to get out of the building.

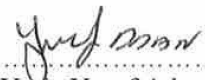
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46. We walked down the stairs and when we got to the ground floor, I saw firemen outside of the main entrance, they told us to come out from the side entrance. The door was already opened. I am not sure if someone left this open, but it was open.

Outside of the building

47. When got outside the building, there were not many people. As we were so close to the fire, we were one of the first ones out of the building.
48. I saw four or five fire fighters and one or two fire engines. There was not that many at the time because it was still early. When we were walking out, the firefighters were still outside. I did not see any of them going into the building. They were talking to each other, when the fire was still inside the building.
49. One of the firefighters was on the phone. I thought he was speaking to a manager. The fire quickly went outside the building and then the firefighters tried to use the hose but could not reach it.
50. The firemen pushed us away when the fire got worse to the leisure sports centre.
51. I did not see ladders being used by the firefighters. The problem was they did not have access to get close to the tower, because of the restricted access after the renovation work was done; there was only one exit for vehicles. They tried to use the hose, but it was useless, the fire was still going up. The police and ambulance also could not get the vehicles in because there was only that one exit.
52. When the fire engine came they had the siren flashing and on but when it was stationary, they did not have the siren noise on.
53. It did not take long for the fire to spread. The fire spread to the outside of the building. It was rising, and the cladding was spitting. I heard explosions and there were fire balls. I saw it from distance, so I cannot say how big or small they were. The colour of the fire started off orange, but then when the fire got bigger, it was a fire colour. When the fire was spreading, it became more smoky and heavy; it was grey and black colour. I saw things falling; it was falling everywhere.
54. I noticed more fire engines and police coming. The Police and the firemen came and told people to go back and they closed the area to the public. There was a crowd of people forming. There were people from Grenfell Tower, Grenfell Walk and the other blocks in the area, and relatives of people

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trapped in the tower. At one point, we could not view the front of the building where people were coming out from, because we were focused on looking at the fire, and the crowd was getting bigger.

55. I saw some people came back from their evening prayers at the mosque; they forced themselves to get into the tower, to get to their family members but they were pushed back by police. They were angry and stressed.
56. I saw people inside the building using their phones as flash lights, asking for help, so people could see them. I could not hear what the people were saying. There were too many people shouting and screaming; I could not hear what they were saying. The people were panicking and desperate to get out.
57. I saw people coming out of the tower and people were helping them. They were not running but coming out slowly, like they were tired. There were covered in smoke. The firemen were giving them masks to help them to breath.
58. I saw the helicopter go above the tower. I thought that there were there to help.
59. I could see the whole building on fire. We thought that we would only be out for twenty minutes and go back again, because the fire did not look big when it started. We were stood there until about 10am in the morning. We were all so tired and in shock.
60. We went to the Christian Centre first. Maryam was not feel very well. She was seen by a volunteer Doctor. After they found out she was pregnant, they called her an ambulance. Abulwahab went with her to Chelsea and Westminster hospital and I stayed with Amna.
61. Me and Amna then went to Rugby Portebello Club, and then later went to Westway sports centre.
62. I did not contact the emergency services or any friends on the night of the fire.

Medical assistance

63. I did not need any medical assistance after the fire.

Assistance after the fire

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64. All the community helped. Everybody went to the Westway Community centre for the first few days.
65. RBKC were not there after the fire. It was only people from the community that came.
66. When Maryam was in hospital, she called RBKC. We went into a hotel on the same day.
67. The TMO did not come for the first few days. We did not know who to talk to and what to do. After that when they knew we were in the hotel, they came to see us. I do not know whether they were from RBKC or TMO, but they said that they were going to help. They said that it was what the government said, and that they must follow what they say.

Statement of Truth

I confirm that the contents of this witness statement are true.

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

Signed:
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