

IN THE MATTER OF THE GRENFELL TOWER INQUIRY

STATEMENT OF RUKEYATU MAMUDU

Preamble

1. I make this statement 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 2 Grenfell Tower at the time of the fire and I escaped from the fire with [REDACTED] (d.o.b. [REDACTED] 05). I am a Core Participant of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry. The focus of this statement is my experience [REDACTED] on 14 June 2017. I also offer some evidence in relation to the aftermath of the disaster. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
3. [REDACTED]
4. I describe below the [REDACTED] and among the many people I knew from that time was a girl called Zainab Deen. She died in the fire with her little boy, Jeremiah who was just two years of age. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Rukeyatu Mamudu

Signed:



Dated:

13th April 18



[Redacted]

[Redacted]

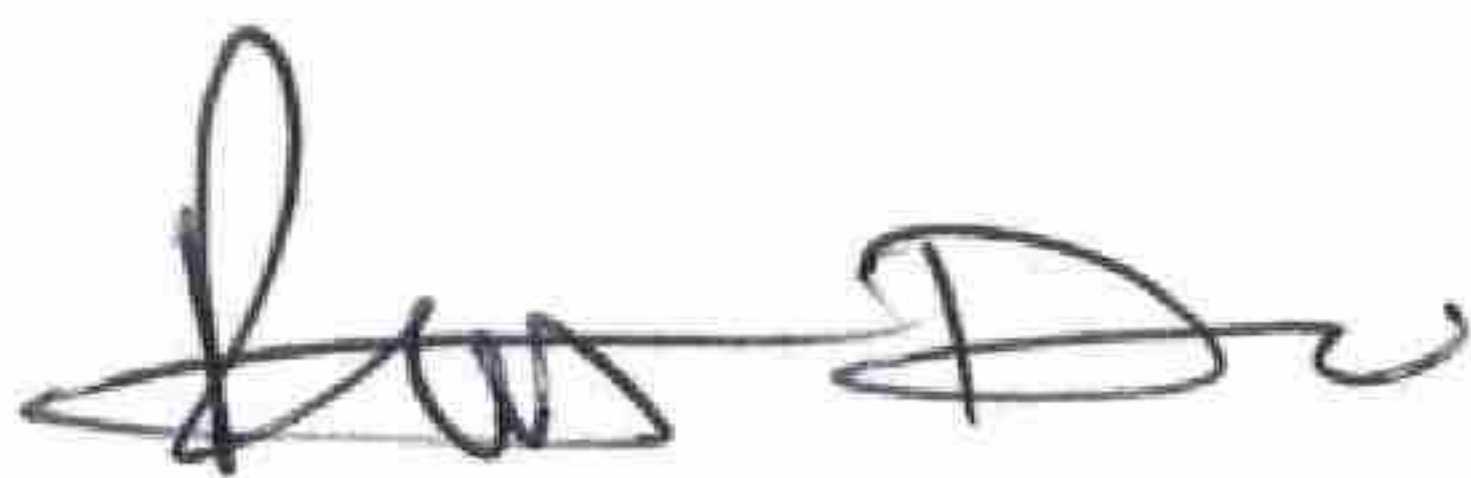
5.

[Redacted]

2

Rukeyatu Mamudu

Signed:



Dated:

13<sup>th</sup> April 18

6.

7.

Rukeyatu Mamudu

Signed:



3

Dated:

13<sup>th</sup> April 18



8.

[REDACTED]

9.

[REDACTED]

Living in Grenfell Tower before the fire

10.

[REDACTED]

11. Our flat at 2 Grenfell Tower was located on the first residential floor of the Tower. It was located on the south of the Tower and reached over on to the corner to the west of the Tower. All the accommodation was on one floor. There were two large bedrooms, a very large living space, a very large kitchen and a bathroom. My bedroom was on the front of the Tower, so it faced Grenfell Walk. The flat came with a garage which was used when the respite carer came to stay: I would move stuff from the living room into the garage to make room for her.

12. Each room had a door which opened and closed. I always left these doors open.

13. The front door to my flat was brand new when I moved in and it did not get change during the time we lived at Grenfell Tower. The door was not one that closed automatically, I had to push it shut in order for it to close. It had a letter box and one lock. However, social services required an extra lock to be put in at the top of the door [REDACTED]

4

Rukeyatu Mamudu

Signed:



Dated:

13<sup>th</sup> April 18



[REDACTED] There was a gap between the floor and the front door. There was a draught. The door did not seal properly.

14. Rats regularly got under my front door and I informed the council of this fact but their only response was that they would arrange for pest control to visit the property. The council did not make any attempt to deal with the rats. About a week before the fire I bought 4 sonic rat repellent devices. The rats continued to come.
15. I had an extractor fan in my kitchen and my bathroom. I did not smell any cooking smells from other flats.
16. When I first moved to the flat I could hear music coming from my neighbour's flat, however, after talking to him about this he stopped playing his music so loud.
17. I do not recall feeling a draught from the windows.

#### **Fire safety at Grenfell Tower**

18. I was not provided with any information regarding fire safety from the council or anyone else when I moved in, nor was I ever told about how to get out of the building during a fire or other emergency.
19. I found out we had a smoke alarm in the kitchen when [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] There were never any visits to check whether the smoke alarm was in working order.

#### **Condition of communal area at Grenfell Tower**

20. I always preferred to use the lifts in the building, however they regularly got stuck, so we often had to go days without a lift. I would only use the stairs if the lifts were out of use or if there was a long queue to use them. Sometimes it took up to five weeks to repair the lift, leaving us with just one lift to use. This meant that occasionally there would be a queue of people waiting to get into a lift.

Rukeyatu Mamudu

Signed:



Dated:

13<sup>th</sup> April 18



21. The lights in the communal landing on my floor were always on and never went out.
22. The landing was very clean as we had a cleaner that came regularly. There was never any rubbish in the stairwell. I did not notice any damage to the doors to the stairwell at any point.

### 13 June 2017

23. On the evening of 13 June 2017, I went out [REDACTED] to buy some more rat repellent devices as I had been advised to install more.
24. We ate fish in chips in the car for dinner and got home around 10:30 pm. We changed into pyjamas and went straight to bed. It would have been about 11/11:30 pm by this time. It was just me and [REDACTED] staying in the flat that night and we both slept in our own bedrooms.

### First awareness

25. At around 12:30 am (it was not yet 1 am), hence 14 June 2017, I woke up to use the bathroom which was very unusual; perhaps because I had eaten late or drank water late. When I finished using the bathroom, I heard a noise. I always kept my bedroom window open as I like cross ventilation. I looked out of my bedroom window and saw a lot of crowds. They were running helter-skelter. I also saw a lot of people standing straight and looking up. I could not decipher who they were. I shouted out of my window, "*What is going on there?*" A man responded from within the crowd, "*Fire, get out*". It was a loud masculine voice. He was on the ground. I could not see any smoke or any sign of fire from my window, all I could see was a large crowd and I could hear screaming.
26. There had been no fire alarm.
27. I did not want to waste time; I went straight to [REDACTED] room and tried to wake him up, he would not wake as he had just gone to sleep. I picked him up. He still did not wake. I sat him down on the bed and put his dressing gown on. I then put [REDACTED]

Rukeyatu Mamudu

Signed: 

Dated: 13<sup>th</sup> April 18



over my shoulder. I was wearing pyjamas – I always wear pyjamas to sleep. I picked up my handbag and dressing gown and I went towards my front door.

28. As there was no smoke in my flat at the time, my smoke alarm had not gone off. There were no signs of smoke or fire until I opened my front door. At this point, smoke came into my house, but the smoke alarm still did not go off. When I opened my door, it was like I had given a vacuum to the smoke to enter into my flat.

#### **Leaving the flat**

29. After opening my front door, I was faced with smoke and I started coughing. I do not remember how thick the smoke was or what colour it was at this point.
30. I do not remember if I closed my front door after leaving the property as I was in such a rush to get outside.
31. The lights in the landing were still on but I do not remember if I was able to see anyone else's front door - I just ran towards the stairs trying to inhale as little smoke as possible. I could not see the stairs but I knew which direction I had to go to be able to reach them. My instinct led me automatically. I knew not to go to the lift.

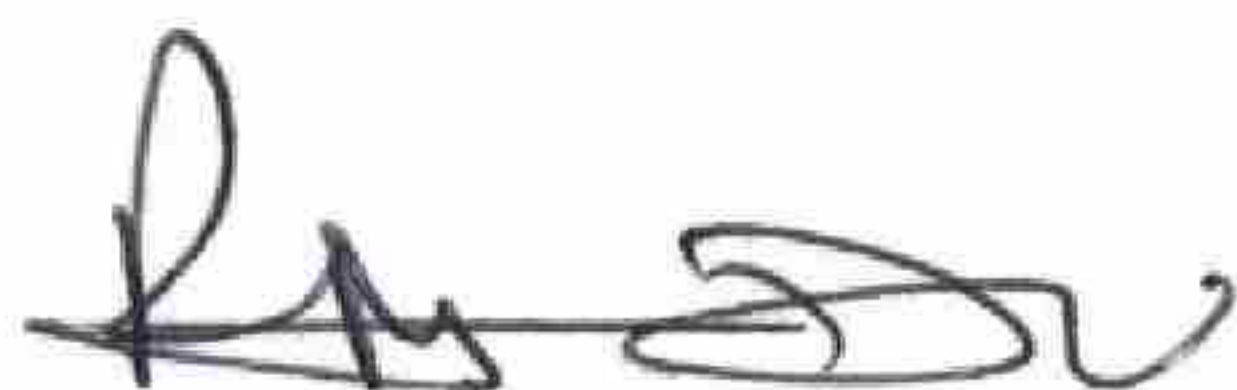
#### **Leaving Grenfell Tower**

32. As usual, the door to the stairs was shut so I had to push it open in order to get to the staircase. I could not see anyone in the landing or stairwell at the time, therefore there was no one for me to ask for help from. I did not see any firefighters inside the building at this point. I could not hear anyone else. I do not remember how thick the smoke was at this point, but I remember that I was coughing and choking so there was definitely some smoke. I did not have time to think about what I could taste; this was a life or death situation - I just wanted us to get out.
33. From my floor there are around 10 steps down, then a sharp corner between the first floor and the ground floor and then another flight of stairs which lead into the main lobby. I

7

Rukeyatu Mamudu

Signed:



Dated:

13<sup>th</sup> April 18



managed to get down the stairs quite fast as there were no one blocking my way, however, because of the sharp corner between the stairs, I fell over. I do not remember how I landed or how [REDACTED] landed but it was at this point [REDACTED] woke up. From that point forward he took control: he took hold of my hand and he helped me get up. Now he was the one leading. He did not get hurt but I knocked my right elbow and right knee. [REDACTED] I felt weakened by this point with the shock. It is not a night to remember. I was aware that [REDACTED] was finding it difficult to breathe.

34. I found the exit door already open. Once outside, [REDACTED] and I sat on a stone bench just across from the Tower. This bench is still there to this day. We sat there for about 20 minutes. I could not see the fire from this position but I could see smoke coming from the east facade. After that I was told by the police to move away from the Tower and go to the leisure centre that is nearby. Whilst I was on my way to the leisure centre I looked back and could see the fire on the east façade. The smoke was black and white. The flames were like golden shooting stars and were spreading so quickly. The fire was bad but I still felt it would stop there and my flat would be safe. I could see the cladding flying everywhere, on the floor and onto other flats.

#### **How the Fire Spread**

35. The fire spread very fast and wild; it spread across and upwards. As the fire started in a flat on a higher floor than mine and the fire was spreading upwards, I noticed that the fire did not initially touch my flat. The flames were coming out of the building.

#### **Firefighters**

36. When I came downstairs more than twenty firefighters were hanging around looking up at the building. There was one firefighter that had a small hose pointed at the building which did not seem very powerful. It did not reach the fire on the fourth floor. I said, "*What the hell are you doing with that?*" I do not think he heard me as he did not reply. He was standing just to the east of the exit.

Rukeyatu Mamudu

Signed:



Dated:

13<sup>th</sup> April 18



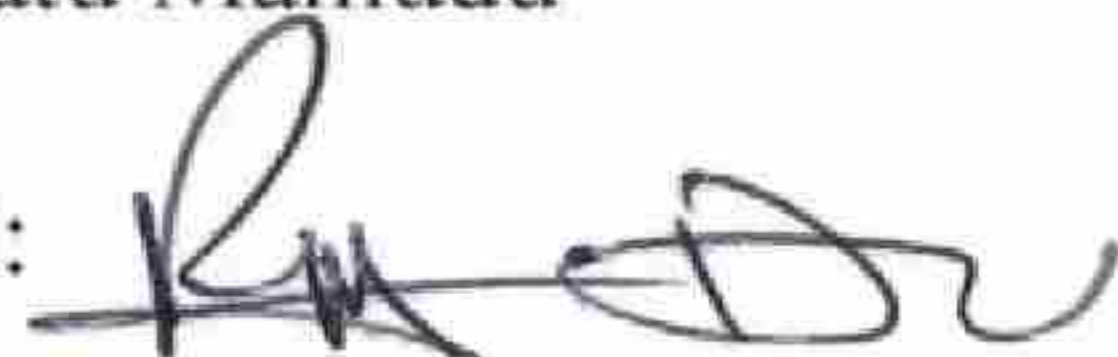
37. There were around four fire engines outside the building, but there were more parked further away that could not reach closer due to other parked cars.
38. The first time a firefighter spoke to me was when I was on the bench he said to me, *"Madam you need to move as this building might collapse"*. No firefighters passed me on our way down the stairs.
39. I saw a number of firefighters standing around looking up at the building. They appeared as if they were confused and shocked at how fast the fire was spreading.

#### **The aftermath**

40. After I was told to move from the bench, I went to sit on the benches in front of the Leisure Centre. I then went to go towards the Portobello Rugby Club as I wanted to get away from the building in case it collapsed. There was a building just behind the Rugby Club with a staircase. We went up those stairs and sat at the top as we were able to view the building from there. I sat there with [REDACTED] watching our home burn down.
41. I said to [REDACTED], *"Is this real - am I dreaming?"* and he replied, *"It is real, the building is burning."*
42. A little girl gave me a portable charger to charge my phone as the battery had died.
43. We stayed sat on those stairs until around 6 am then a policeman came with a van and asked if I was a survivor, I said *"Yes,"* he said that he was trying to gather the survivors and take them all to Harrow Club. We did not stay in the Harrow Club for long, shortly after another van was organised to come and take us all to the Portobello Rugby Club.
44. We were given breakfast at the Portobello Rugby Club, they provided us with tea, biscuits and water.

Rukeyatu Mamudu

Signed:



Dated:

13<sup>th</sup> April 18



45. At around midday on 14 June, a minibus came to the Rugby Club and moved us to the [REDACTED] I am not sure if it was the council that had organised this, but I assume it was.

46. I did not find it easy to get information about people I knew inside the Tower such as Zainab and her son, until I saw them on the news as missing.

47.

48.


49.

50.

51.

52.

53.



13<sup>th</sup> April 18



[REDACTED]

**Other Matters**

54.

[REDACTED]

55.

[REDACTED]

56.

[REDACTED]

57.

[REDACTED]

58. I am willing to give evidence to the Inquiry and I am willing for the Inquiry to come back to me for more information.

**Statement of Truth**

I confirm that the content of this witness statement is 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:



Dated:

13<sup>th</sup> April 18

11

Rukeyatu Mamudu

Signed:



Dated:

13<sup>th</sup> April 18