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Mayor's Office



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**CANADIAN COMMISSION FOR UNESCO
COMMISSION CANADIENNE POUR L'UNESCO**

January 13, 2006

His Worship Peter J. Kelly
Mayor of Halifax
City Hall
P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3A5

Dear Mr. Mayor,

On behalf of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, I would like to thank you for your interest in the call for a Coalition of Canadian Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination. As you know, this initiative is part of an international UNESCO project, and the Canadian Commission for UNESCO is working to develop a coalition adapted to the needs of Canadian municipalities. I am also enclosing the current draft of the declaration proposed for signature by municipalities joining the Coalition.

We would be grateful if you would review the draft declaration, the ten commitments outlined in the sample plan, as well as the suggested actions that could be taken.

We hope that this background information will enable your municipality to consider joining the Coalition, as other municipalities are doing. If you have not already done so, we would also ask that you designate a contact person in your municipality for further communication. If you require further information, please contact Elisabeth Barot at the Canadian Commission for UNESCO at elizabeth.barot@unesco.ca

Yours sincerely,

David A. Walden
Secretary-General

Encls.

Documents enclosed

- **Call for a Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination**
- **Sample of a Plan of Action Against Racism**
- **Declaration or Declaration of Intent to Join the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism**

Call for a Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination

An International Movement

In 2004, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) launched the International Coalition of Cities Against Racism initiative to establish a network of cities in Africa, Arab states, Latin America and Caribbean region, North America, Asia-Pacific and Europe interested in sharing experiences to improve their ability to fight racism, discrimination and xenophobia. In Europe, more than 40 cities are part of the coalition and other cities have expressed interest in joining as well.

In Canada, the Canadian Commission for UNESCO is working in partnership with a number of communities and organizations across the country to develop a Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and discrimination.

How do Canadian municipalities benefit by joining the Coalition?

Racism raises barriers against the development of individuals and groups, corrupts those who practice it, and divides communities. It is a serious threat to the peaceful coexistence and exchange among communities and within communities, it imperils democracy and curtails the meaningful participation of residents. Racism entrenches and aggravates inequalities within society.

Cities are the main focus of ethnic and cultural mixing. They are an ideal place to develop policies, and implement concrete strategies and actions to eliminate racism. By eliminating racism and multiple forms of discrimination, cities are able to build inclusive and respectful societies where everyone has an equal opportunity to participate in the economic, social, cultural, recreational, and political life of the city.

By joining together in a coalition, municipalities will be able to:

- document and advance work within their own jurisdiction in combating racism and discrimination and building more inclusive communities;
- exchange practices and expertise with like-minded people in municipalities and groups in Canada and around the world;
- cooperate with other members of civil society to develop better tools to measure success.

Who is involved in helping to build the Coalition and the Action Research component?

Canadian Commission for UNESCO (CCU)

The Canadian Commission for UNESCO launched the Call for a Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination at the Roundtable on Combating Urban Racism held in Ottawa, in January 2005. UNESCO's proposal was discussed with potential partners such as the cities of Gatineau, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto and Vancouver, as well as non-governmental organisations (NGOs), academics and human rights commissions. The idea of creating an international platform of exchange and solidarity was well received. With its partners, the CCU developed a draft set of ten commitments and a sample plan of action against racism and discrimination based on the European Coalition but adapted for the Canadian reality. CCU and its partners have also been very successful in reaching out to local, provincial and federal governments, public institutions and NGOs.

UNESCO (Paris)

At the international level, UNESCO provides technical and scientific support to world regional coalitions, including the Canadian coalition. In particular, it assists world regional coalitions with:

- technical support such as liaison and co-ordination with world regions, documentation, dissemination of information, and other support as required; as well as
- scientific support such as the development of proposals for thematic discussions, organisation of panels, and the development of research and evaluation tools.

Pan-Canadian Working Group

A working group, with partners from across Canada has been established.¹ This group's role is to spread the word about the initiative. Consultations have been held with a wide range of stakeholders, including communities, institutions, and various levels of governments, including local, provincial, territorial and federal bodies, to seek their support and input into the draft set of commitments and plan of action. The group has proposed a process for municipal governments to join the Canadian coalition and is developing a strategy to mobilize other stakeholders to join these efforts.

Action Research

Research is key to developing indicators and standards, generating data, sharing best practices and measuring progress. Research being undertaken by UNESCO along with other organizations and municipalities will help improve the capacity to track and evaluate the impact of actions taken to address racism and discrimination, and to

¹ Participants in the drafting group included: the Aboriginal Youth Network, the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission, the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, the City of Toronto, the Ontario Human Rights Commission, and the University of Montreal.

showcase examples of effective policies and programs. UNESCO has sponsored a preliminary study to understand the use of indicators by municipalities to evaluate the success of their policies and activities to combat racism and discrimination. The study, conducted by the Centre for Research on Immigration, Ethnicity and Citizenship (CRIEC)², looked at indicators for the cities of Boston, Montreal, Saskatoon, Stockholm, Toronto and Vancouver. This study is available from the CCU. Those involved in related research are invited to contact the CCU to explore ways to link with the Coalition's work.

What can municipalities do to become involved in the Coalition?

Cities and municipal governments are invited to:

- contact the Canadian Commission for UNESCO to learn more about the Coalition
- discuss the benefits of joining the Coalition with other stakeholders
- send a letter from the Mayor to the Canadian Commission for UNESCO expressing the municipality's interest in joining the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination
- develop and promote the initiative within your municipality
- inform the Canadian Commission for UNESCO of your municipality's support for the ten commitments and your pledge to develop your own plan of action, and to measure and report progress on your action plan
- evaluate activities you are already undertaking that correspond to one or more of the ten commitments
- identify new actions relating to one or more commitments that your municipality will undertake in the coming years
- encourage other cities and municipal governments to join the coalition
- participate in monitoring and evaluating progress made in implementing actions as a member of the Coalition.

What actions can individuals and community organizations take?

Eliminating racism and discrimination is everyone's business. Individuals, community organizations, groups, and any interested party can contact the Canadian Commission for UNESCO to learn more about this initiative. Here are some suggestions:

- contact your municipality to learn if there are plans to join the Coalition
- conduct a consultation on the proposed ten commitments and sample plan of action against racism and discrimination and decide how your organization could participate in the Coalition
- broaden awareness by discussing and sharing information about this initiative with other local stakeholders
- write to your Mayor to encourage participation in the Coalition
- ask for this initiative to be put on the City Council business agenda and organise members of your community to make a presentation to Council explaining the

² CRIEC Centre of Research on Immigration Ethnicity and Citizenship, University of Quebec in Montreal, Feb.2005

reasons why belonging to the coalition could reinforce action against racism and discrimination how it would be of benefit to everyone.

[Call out box]

To get involved in Canada, contact the Canadian Commission for UNESCO. Write to Elisabeth Barot, Program Officer at elizabeth.barot@unesco.ca or telephone at 1-800-263-5588 ext. 5567
For more information on UNESCO's International Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination, visit www.unesco.org/shs/citiesagainstracism

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Activities undertaken to date to broaden awareness and support to the Coalition of Canadian Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination:

Roundtable on Combating Urban Racism, January 24, 2005, Ottawa

National consultation at the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, March 11, 2005, Toronto

Montreal ad hoc working group consultation, March 29, 2005, Montreal

Quebec Working Group consultation, April 19, 2005, Montreal

Presentation to the Ontario Large Urban Mayors Forum, May 6, 2005, Barrie

Nova Scotia Partners Against Racism consultation, May 16-18, 2005, Halifax

Presentation at the Regional Meeting of Saskatchewan Cities, May 2005, Saskatoon

Workshop at the Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies, June 13, 2005, Saskatoon

The Call for a Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination was endorsed by the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies, June 15, 2005, Saskatoon

Standing Committee on Social Development, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, September, 2005, Charlottetown, passed a motion calling on its members to support and promote the Coalition.

Presentation to *Racism-Free Alberta*, a coalition of umbrella organizations engaged in anti-racism and anti-discrimination work in Alberta

Presentation to representatives of provincial and federal departments with multiculturalism and human rights responsibilities in Alberta in September, 2005

Presentation to the Alberta Community Economic Development Annual Conference in October, 2005 in Red Deer

Presentation on November 6, 2005 to the advisory council for the Metropolis Project in Montreal, one of the 5 Canadian centres of excellence working on immigration and cities

Presentation to the National Anti-Racism Council of Canada's (NARCC) annual conference in Ottawa, November 12, 2005

Information booth at the southwest Municipal Conference, Association of Municipalities of Ontario, London, ON, November 18, 2005

International activities taking place in Canada

Workshop at the 10th International Metropolis Conference, October 2005, Toronto

The International Coalition of Municipalities at the World Urban Forum, June 2006, Vancouver

SAMPLE OF A PLAN OF ACTION AGAINST RACISM

In undertaking these Commitments and in developing unique plans of action for addressing racism and discrimination, municipalities are encouraged to take a participative approach that will engage Aboriginal people and initiate dialogue among communities.

COMMITMENT 1: Increase vigilance against systemic and individual racism and discrimination.

Objectives:

To set up and/or reinforce a monitoring, vigilance and solidarity network against racism at the municipal level.

Examples of action:

- a) Support or establish, in collaboration with community organizations, a monitoring and rapid response system to identify and respond to acts of racism, hate crimes and incidents, including bringing such incidents to the attention of the appropriate authorities.
- b) Put racism and discrimination on the agenda of various municipal consultation and cooperation groups that exist within the municipality (e.g., youth commissions, intercultural relations boards, various committees).
- c) Establish an interagency group of knowledgeable employees, representing agencies with potential responsibility for resolving such conflicts (police, schools, youth workers, Aboriginal liaison workers, social workers, NGOs, etc.), with responsibility for coordinating actions at an early stage when hate crimes or group conflicts arise.
- d) Provide training on recognizing, reporting and responding to hate crimes and conflict management to employees from relevant agencies and institutions.
- e) Work in concert with other levels of government and other organizations on strategies to combat hate/bias.
- f) Report regularly on the incidence of hate crimes.
- g) Formulate a vision statement and / or policy that would
 - Acknowledge the existence of racism and discrimination and the historical and ongoing disadvantage faced by some groups and individuals in the community;
 - Recognize domestic human rights charters and legislation, policies, and case law, as well as international conventions; and,
 - Affirm the commitment to take steps to promote and protect human rights.
- h) Establish a pool of experts (researchers and practitioners, including those from Aboriginal and racialized communities) with relevant competence to

provide the local community with advice and carry out analyses of incidents of hate or racism.

- i) Support or establish a mechanism for consultation with groups and individuals involved in the fight against racism and discrimination (e.g. NGOs, Aboriginal organizations, youth, artists, police services, the judiciary, provincial and territorial human rights commissions *etc.*)
- j) Develop and implement an alternative dispute resolution mechanism in the municipal structure to address grievances related to human rights and discrimination.

COMMITMENT 2: Broaden accountability and monitor racism and discrimination in the municipality and monitor municipal actions taken to address racism and discrimination.

Objectives:

To demonstrate transparency and accountability in all sectors of municipal life where racism and discrimination may occur.

To initiate or facilitate appropriate collection and use of data on hate activities, racism and discrimination.

To set common indicators in order to assess the impact of municipal policies and programs.

To establish achievable objectives for the reduction of racism and discrimination.

Examples of action:

- a) Set up formal means of collecting data and information on racism and discrimination in all fields of municipal endeavour, and share results in a manner that advances human rights.
- b) Define achievable objectives and apply common indicators in order to assess incidents and trends in racism and discrimination (including profiling) and the impact of municipal policies and programs.
- c) Initiate and maintain an on-going dialogue between researchers, policy makers and community advocates for the purpose of promoting research on the impact of racism and the effectiveness of actions taken to address racism as well as making recommendations for further municipal action.
- d) Involve representatives of Aboriginal and racialized communities in developing methodology for collection, analysis and reporting of data (e.g. on hate crimes, on police contacts, on representation on decision-making and executive bodies (such as municipal council) or in the municipal workforce (at all levels).

COMMITMENT 3: Increase support for people who experience racism and discrimination.

Objectives:

Support those who experience racism and discrimination to exercise and defend their rights including access to remedies (counselling, monitoring, access to human rights commission, etc.) and preventive measures to counter racism and discrimination.

Examples of action:

- a) Establish or enhance an existing complaints mechanism within municipal authority (ombudsperson, anti-discrimination unit, etc.) to deal with allegations of systemic and individual acts of racism and discrimination.
- b) Create a directory of Aboriginal and racialized community leaders who are recognized and respected as trainers/facilitators on cultural awareness and promotion of healthy relationships.
- c) Provide support to local entities which provide legal and psychological support to those who experience racism and discrimination.
- d) Establish or enhance policies and measures for responding to systemic and individual acts of racism, including policy, program and procedural changes, remedial and disciplinary measures, education and training.

COMMITMENT 4: Inform and involve all residents in anti-racism initiatives and decision-making.

Objectives:

To ensure, by using a participatory approach, that municipal dwellers are informed about their rights and obligations, protections as well as legal options and penalties for racist acts or behaviour.

To reinforce the representation of Aboriginal and racialized communities in local decision-making entities.

Examples of actions:

- a) Increase representatives of Aboriginal and racialized communities on municipal boards, commissions and committees.
- b) Organize, on a regular basis, municipal forums against racism, in collaboration with existing organizations and mechanisms, in order to offer citizens an opportunity to discuss the problems of racism and discrimination in the municipality, including impact of local policies and programs.
- c) Empower local NGOs and civil society to provide information and take action against racism and discrimination.

- d) Make available resource and contact information to those who experience racism or discrimination.
- e) Promote year-round anti-racism activities and commemorate significant dates such as March 21 (International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination), June 21 (Aboriginal Awareness Day), December 10 (International Human Rights Day) with initiatives to increase awareness and mobilization.
- f) Support community organizations, businesses and the public sector in developing initiatives to combat racism and discrimination and support full inclusion and participation of all residents.
- g) Implement a positive course of action in local decision-making entities intended to improve the representation of Aboriginal and racialized communities.
- h) Disseminate widely information on the rights and obligations of a multiethnic and multicultural society, on the municipality's anti-racism commitments, as well as remedies and penalties for racist acts and behaviour.

COMMITMENT 5: Support measures to promote equity in the labour market.

Objectives:

To provide support for the full participation of Aboriginal and racialized communities in the municipality's economic life.

Examples of actions:

- a) Require organizations requesting grant support or wishing to do business with the municipality to actively demonstrate their commitment to diversity and inclusion.
- b) Support dialogue and consultation with all levels of government to develop an integrated approach to immigration, refugee and diversity issues as they impact on urban policy issues.
- c) Employ the existing powers of the municipality as a purchaser of goods and services through the inclusion of non-discrimination clauses in local contracts.
- d) Set up, in partnership with local chambers of commerce, a certification program for businesses, organizations and professional bodies to integrate mechanisms in their own organizations for combating racism and building inclusive and respectful workplaces.
- e) Support, in association with professional bodies, employee associations and trade unions the development of relevant learning and development programmes aimed at enabling employees to deliver culturally sensitive and appropriate services.
- f) Make business licences conditional on non-discriminatory practices to audit the organization and to ensure equity.

- g) Develop policies and practices regarding foreign credentials, thus allowing more immigrants access to employment opportunities.
- h) Monitor and analyze the impact of federal and provincial or territorial legislation and policies that affect diverse communities within the municipality.
- i) Set up a partnership with businesses that support municipal efforts to combat racism and discrimination.

COMMITMENT 6: Provide equal opportunities as an employer, service provider and contractor.

Objectives:

To promote, implement and enforce anti-racism strategies including inclusive and non-discriminatory policies and practices within the organization.

To ensure equitable access to opportunity as an employer and service provider.

Examples of actions:

- a) Ensure that equity and the elimination of racism and discrimination are examined and addressed at a systemic level in all aspects of the municipality's operations including corporate planning, policy and program development, procedures and practices, service delivery, contracting, as well as organizational culture.
- b) Perform regular diversity audits to inform the development of appropriate policies and practices in the areas of employment, services and contracts, and measure progress toward diversity outcomes.
- c) Identify the learning and development needs of municipal employees, in partnership with unions, and implement training and upgrading modules in order to enhance their ability to manage ethnic and cultural diversity, promote intercultural dialogue, develop competence in antidiscriminatory practice and acquire the necessary skills in order to provide culturally sensitive and appropriate services.
- d) Review and improve the representation of Aboriginal and racialized communities among municipal staff, including at senior management levels.
- e) Set up a special scholarship and training program for youth from Aboriginal and racialized communities to help increase their representation in the municipal workforce.
- f) Implement an impact and needs assessment when developing any new initiative to ensure it supports the outcomes of full inclusion and access, without discrimination.
- g) Develop a comprehensive set of equity and access policies and appropriate complaint procedures in relation to anti-racism, hate and bias activities, human rights, workplace harassment, access to services, provision of service in multiple languages and formats.

h) Monitor, train and develop employees to achieve this objective.

COMMITMENT 7: Support measures to challenge racism and discrimination in housing and implement measures to promote diversity and equal opportunity.

Objectives:

To strengthen policies against housing discrimination and promote effective urban planning within the municipality.

Examples of actions:

- a) Have the Municipality investigate ways to encourage equity policies, such as providing public recognition of equal opportunity policies and other incentives and providing research to show that such policies will not impose extra costs on landlords.
- b) Examine housing and urban planning practices, policies and plans and address systemic barriers that have an adverse and discriminatory effect on Aboriginal and racialized communities, including the further marginalization of those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- c) Work with tourist associations, bed and breakfast associations and hoteliers associations to draw up a Code of Practice for public and private bodies involved in renting and selling accommodation to combat discrimination in access to housing.
- d) Work with housing providers, landlords and service organizations to adopt equitable policies (including developing a code of conduct) with respect to qualifying applicants and selecting tenants for market rent units consistent with human rights principles.
- e) Work with other levels of government on immigration and diversity-related initiatives related to housing, including social housing.
- f) Work with financial institutions, including banks, to examine their banking policies and procedures to ensure there is no discriminatory effect on Aboriginal and racialized communities.
- g) Organize meeting between the Mayor and landlords to promote the adoption of an "equity policy" by the municipality's landlords.
- h) Encourage homeowners, landlords, real estate agents and financial institutions to commit to a municipal anti-discrimination code of practice.
- i) Establish or support advisory services responsible for assisting and supporting residents from Aboriginal and racialized communities in seeking accommodation in both the public and private sectors.

COMMITMENT 8: Support measures to challenge racism and discrimination in the education sector, as well as in other forms of learning, and promote diversity and equal opportunity.

Objectives:

To develop and strengthen partnerships that support measures against racism and discrimination with respect to access to education and other forms of learning.

To promote opportunities to dialogue, learn and work together towards mobilizing against racism and discrimination, and creating a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of each person so that each person feels a part of the community and able to contribute fully to the development and well-being of the community.

Examples of actions:

- a) Create a program to recognize schools for their anti-racist and anti-discrimination initiatives.
- b) Use public education and outreach to promote understanding between different cultures, and address racism and discrimination.
- c) Encourage the development of teaching materials on human rights, respect for human dignity, peaceful coexistence and intercultural dialogue that can contribute to enhancement of the ability of pupils, teachers and trainers to operate in a pluralistic environment free from racism and discrimination encouraging a better knowledge of everybody's history.
- d) Sensitize and train elected officials and government employees on education that takes into account mutual respect, citizenship, human rights and the fight against racism.
- e) Develop awareness, information and intervention tools on mutual respect, citizenship, human rights and the fight against racism.
- f) Promote cross-community efforts, in conjunction with partners, to fight against inequality, racism and discrimination ("intercultural harmony committees," "community school," etc.).
- g) Support the development of anti-discrimination policies among educational institutions to combat racism and discrimination in access to education and schools.
- h) Develop programs that promote equitable access to education.

COMMITMENT 9: Promote respect, understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity and the inclusion of Aboriginal and racialized communities in the cultural fabric of the municipality.

Objectives:

To ensure the preservation, diffusion and appreciation for the diverse range of cultural expression and heritage of municipal dwellers, in particular those from Aboriginal and racialized communities.

To create a social, cultural and economic environment that will enable all residents not only to enjoy the benefit of culture but also to take an active part in overall cultural life and in the process of cultural development.

Examples of actions:

- a) Provide equitable support to cultural projects programmes, events and infrastructure so that the diversity of the community can be expressed in a fair and representative way.
- b) Take actions to encourage and safeguard the community's linguistic diversity by supporting expression, creation and dissemination in a diversity of languages that represent the cultural pluralism of the community.
- c) Support initiatives that increase the expertise and capacity within multicultural, racial and ethnocultural organizations to effect change in their own organizations, other organizations and their communities that will enable their members to participate fully in society.
- d) Support and encourage initiatives to overcome barriers that limit members of the ethnocultural, multicultural and racial communities from participating as equal partners in the community.
- e) Support initiatives that promote greater intercultural understanding, positive intercultural relationships and greater acceptance of diversity.
- f) Name places (streets, squares, monuments, neighbourhoods) and/or commemorate events specifically relevant to groups experiencing discrimination, in order to recognize their contributions and to integrate them into the memory and collective identity of the municipality.

COMMITMENT 10: Support policing services in their efforts to be exemplary institutions in the fight against racism and discrimination.

Objectives:

To implement effective policies and practices to prevent and respond to racism and discrimination in policing services.

To promote accountability of, and public confidence in, policing services.

To ensure that policing organizations represent the diversity of the populations that they serve.

Examples of actions:

- a) Consult with local communities to determine community concerns and to receive their input on measures that are required to respond to these concerns.
- b) Establish or enhance, if already in existence, a comprehensive anti-racism and anti-discrimination vision statement and policy for policing organizations.
- c) Establish or enhance mechanisms for ongoing monitoring of the effects of police activities on Aboriginal and racialized communities, including through the collection and analysis of appropriate data.

- d) Review and update all policies, procedures, practices, codes of ethics, *etc.* to ensure that they are consistent with human rights legislation, case law and policy, anti-racism and anti-discrimination principles.
- e) Undertake organizational change initiatives, corrective measures or outreach initiatives to address inequity or disadvantage.
- f) Implement programs to ensure appropriate representation of Aboriginal and racialized groups in recruitment and at all levels of policing organizations.
- g) Implement or enhance training of all persons engaged in law enforcement in human rights, anti-racism and anti-discrimination, *etc.* and ensure that the training is effective, appropriate and timely.
- h) Adopt specific programmes and policies to address issues of concern to Aboriginal and racialized communities, and other historically disadvantaged groups (*e.g.* against racial profiling and racially biased policing, hate crimes and to ensure accommodation of persons with disabilities).
- i) Ensure an independent, effective and accessible complaint procedure.
- j) Monitor the effectiveness of the various measures undertaken to fulfil this commitment.

APPENDIX: INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC LEGAL FRAMEWORK IN THE FIGHT AGAINST RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION

International Level

Among the goals stated in the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945) is to “achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion” (article 1.3);

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) stipulates that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” (article 1) and that “everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status” (article 2);

The *United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination* (1963) specifies that “discrimination between human beings on the ground of race, colour or ethnic origin is an offence to human dignity and shall be condemned as a denial of the principles of the *Charter of the United Nations*, as a violation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, as an obstacle to friendly and peaceful relations among nations and as a fact capable of disturbing peace and security among peoples” (article 1);

The *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (1966) specifies that:

- “Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to respect and to ensure to all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction the rights recognized in the present Covenant, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status” (article 2.1);
- “Any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law” (article 20.2);
- “All persons are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection of the law. In this respect, the law shall prohibit any discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status” (article 26);

The *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (1966) similarly contains provisions that prohibit any form of discrimination, notably discrimination related to race, colour or national/ethnic origin;

The *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination* (1975) defines racial discrimination as “any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life” (article 1), affirms that, among other things, “any doctrine of superiority based on racial differentiation is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous” and requires States to “pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating racial discrimination in all its forms and promoting understanding among all races,” and in particular to “engage in no act or practice of racial discrimination against persons, groups of persons or institutions and to ensure that all public authorities and public institutions, national and local, shall act in conformity with this obligation” and to “prohibit and bring to an end, by all appropriate means, including legislation as required by circumstances, racial discrimination by any persons, group or organization”;

The case law of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, in terms of both individual communications and final observations toward the periodic reports from States is consistent in its fight against discrimination;

The *Declaration and the Programme of Action* released by the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, held in Durban in September 2001, appeals to the responsibility of various levels of State governments (federal and local) to combat racism and state that “the fundamental role of civil society in the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, in particular in assisting States to develop regulations and strategies, in taking measures and action against such forms of discrimination and through follow-up implementation” (par. 116 of the Declaration);

The reports of the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental liberties of Aboriginal peoples, which denounce and document numerous situations of racism and discrimination, are also relevant;

National Level

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* stipulates: “Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability” (section 15.1);

Under the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, “all individuals should have an opportunity equal with other individuals to make for themselves the lives that they are able and wish to have and to have their needs accommodated, consistent with their duties and obligations as members of society, without being hindered in or prevented from doing so by discriminatory practices based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability or conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted”;

The *Citizenship Act* provides that all Canadians, whether by birth or by choice, enjoy equal status, are entitled to the same rights, powers and privileges and are subject to the same obligations, duties and liabilities;

The *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* provides that the “Government of Canada recognizes the diversity of Canadians as regards race, national or ethnic origin, colour and religion as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society and is committed to a policy of multiculturalism designed to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians while working to achieve the equality of all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada”, (Preamble), affirms that multiculturalism “reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society and acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage” (section 3(1)(a)) and that it represents “a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian heritage and identity and that it provides an invaluable resource in the shaping of Canada’s future” (section 3(1)(b));

The recent *Canada’s Action Plan Against Racism* encapsulates a six-point approach:

1. Assist victims and groups vulnerable to racism and related forms of discrimination
2. Develop forward-looking approaches to promote diversity and combat racism
3. Strengthen the role of civil society
4. Strengthen regional and international cooperation
5. Educate children and youth on diversity and anti-racism
6. Counter hate and bias

and under which, through an initiative called “Our Diverse Cities,” a number of departments (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Canadian Heritage, the National Secretariat on Homelessness, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Infrastructure Canada) are working with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to explore diversity and immigration needs in urban policy-making and cooperation with civil society.

The *Urban Aboriginal Strategy*, introduced in 1998 under the aegis of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, addresses, in partnership with stakeholders, the serious socio-economic needs of urban Aboriginal people and the need to improve policy development and program

coordination at the federal and provincial level to reduce the level of disparity that urban Aboriginal people currently face and to offer these people better government programs that meet their local need and priorities.

Provincial Level

Provincial and territorial human rights codes are premised on the principle that all human beings are equal in worth and dignity, and are entitled to equal protection of the law, as well as that every person has a right to full and equal recognition and exercise of his or her human rights and freedoms, without distinction, exclusion or preference based on some or all of the following: race, colour, ancestry, ethnic origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, civil, marital or family status, age, religion, political belief, language, ethnic or national origin, social condition, or disability. Discrimination exists where such a distinction, exclusion or preference has the effect of nullifying or impairing such rights, and human rights codes prohibit discrimination and harassment.

For example in Quebec:

- The *Declaration by the Government of Québec on Ethnic and Race Relations* (1986) points out that “full and complete acceptance by Québec of international agreements and pacts on human rights, especially the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, ratified by the Government of Québec on May 10, 1978, which proclaim, among other things, that any doctrine of superiority based on racial differentiation is scientifically false, morally reprehensible and socially unjust and dangerous” and states, among other things: “The Government of Québec categorically censures all forms of racism and racial discrimination. (. . .) The Government of Québec resolves to see that all its departments and agencies comply with the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms. (. . .) The Government of Québec will see that every person’s right to equality is respected as regards work, housing, health, social and educational services and other services offered to the public and access to public places, without discrimination as the race, colour, religion, ethnic or national origin”;
- This historical commitment to democratic citizenship, civic and intercultural relations and to the struggle against racism and discrimination, was reinforced by the Government of Québec’s policy statement on immigration and integration (1990) and by the work of the Conseil des relations interculturelles du Québec;
- The National Assembly of Québec passed resolutions, on 20 March 1985 and 30 May 1989, on the recognition of 10 Aboriginal nations (Abenaki, Algonquin, Attikamek, Cree, Huron, Micmac, Mohawk, Montagnais, Naskapi and Malecite) and of the Inuit people of Québec;

- The Government of Québec has established a nation-to-nation relationship with the Aboriginal peoples of Quebec, including the Cree (the so-called “Paix des Braves Agreement” in 2002) and the Inuit (Agreement-in-principle of a general nature, 2004), which has opened a new stage in the recognition of Aboriginal rights and in collaboration based on dialogue and mutual respect.

**DECLARATION or DECLARATION OF INTENT TO JOIN
THE CANADIAN COALITION OF MUNICIPALITIES AGAINST RACISM**

Given that:

1. The Canadian Commission for UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) is calling on municipalities to join a Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and be part of UNESCO's international coalition launched in 2004; and
2. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities endorses the Call for a Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and encourages its members to join; and

Whereas:

3. Municipal governments in Canada, along with other levels of government, have responsibilities under Canada's *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* as well as federal, provincial and territorial human rights codes, and therefore have an important role to play in combating racism and discrimination and fostering equality and respect for all citizens;

Be it resolved that:

4. The Municipality of _____ agrees to join OR _____ declares its interest in (intent to join as soon as possible) the Coalition of Canadian Municipalities Against Racism and in joining the Coalition agrees to adopt (OR re-affirm) the ten Common Commitments set out below as well as develop OR adapt its own unique Plan of Action against racism accordingly.
5. These Common Commitments and the Municipality's unique Plan of Action will be an integral part of the Municipality's strategies and policies and will be evaluated accordingly.
6. In developing OR adapting and implementing its own unique Plan of Action towards progressive realization of the Common Commitments, the Municipality will cooperate with other organizations and jurisdictions including other levels of government, Aboriginal peoples,¹ public and private sector institutions, and civil society organizations, who have responsibilities in the area of human rights including any specific jurisdiction in matters falling under these Common Commitments.
7. The Municipality will set its priorities, actions and timelines and allocate resources according to its unique circumstances, and within its means and jurisdiction. The Municipality will exchange its expertise and share best practices with other municipalities involved in the Coalition, and will report publicly on an annual basis on actions undertaken towards progressive realization of these Common Commitments. ...

(Date)

(Place)

(Signature)

¹ In undertaking these Commitments and in developing unique plans of action for addressing racism and discrimination, municipalities will be encouraged to take a participative approach that will engage Aboriginal people

**CANADIAN COALITION OF MUNICIPALITIES AGAINST RACISM
TEN COMMON COMMITMENTS**

In undertaking these Commitments and in developing unique plans of action for addressing racism and discrimination, municipalities will be encouraged to take a participative approach that will engage Aboriginal people and initiate dialogue among communities

COMMITMENT 1: Increase vigilance against systemic and individual racism and discrimination

COMMITMENT 2: Broaden accountability and monitor racism and discrimination in the municipality and monitor municipal actions taken to address racism and discrimination

COMMITMENT 3: Increase support for people who experience racism and discrimination

COMMITMENT 4: Inform and involve all residents in anti-racism initiatives and decision-making

COMMITMENT 5: Support measures to promote equity in the labour market

COMMITMENT 6: Provide equal opportunities as an employer, service provider and contractor

COMMITMENT 7: Support measures to challenge racism and discrimination in housing and implement measures to promote diversity and equal opportunity

COMMITMENT 8: Support measures to challenge racism and discrimination in the education sector, as well as in other forms of learning, and promote diversity and equal opportunity

COMMITMENT 9: Promote respect, understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity and the inclusion of Aboriginal and racialized communities into the cultural fabric of the municipality

COMMITMENT 10: Support policing services in their efforts to be exemplary institutions in the fight against racism and discrimination