

Minister
of Canadian Heritage



Ministre
du Patrimoine canadien

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0M5

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE TENTH REPORT OF THE STANDING
COMMITTEE ON CANADIAN HERITAGE ENTITLED: TAKING ACTION
AGAINST SYSTEMIC RACISM AND RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION INCLUDING
ISLAMOPHOBIA

JUN 01 2018

The Honourable Julie Dabrusin, P.C., M.P.
Chair, Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
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Dear Ms. Dabrusin:

Pursuant to the House of Commons Standing Order 109, the Government of Canada is pleased to respond to the Tenth Report of the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage (the Committee), entitled "Taking Action Against Systemic Racism and Religious Discrimination Including Islamophobia" presented in the House of Commons on February 1, 2018.

The Government of Canada would like to thank members of the Committee for preparing the report and providing recommendations on these complex, multifaceted issues. The Government also extends its gratitude to the many individuals who provided testimony and input to the Committee.

The Government recognizes the importance of combating all forms of systemic, or institutional, racism and religious discrimination, including Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, anti-Black racism, and anti-Indigenous racism, among others. As the Prime Minister noted on March 21, 2017, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, "racism devalues individuals, divides communities, and breeds fear and animosity throughout society." While Canada is one of the most diverse and inclusive countries in the world, with a commitment to multiculturalism that is enshrined in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, it is not perfect and can do better.

The Government also agrees that action is required to counter the effects of systemic racism and all forms of religious discrimination, including Islamophobia. Our institutions need to be responsive to the needs of an increasingly diverse population. To this end, the Government is actively taking steps to ensure that Canadians are better served by its programs and policies. The Government understands that discrimination can

Canada

be experienced differently and can be compounded by various aspects of an individual's identity, such as gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, immigration status, age and ability. Reliable data and analysis are needed to understand the complexity of these issues. This is why the Government has made a commitment to improve data collection, analysis and research.

The Government acknowledges that to effectively counter bigotry and hatred, a whole-of-government approach that is informed by the views of those who are directly impacted by racism and religious discrimination would be most effective. To this end, a range of commitments were announced in Budget 2018 that will enhance the Government's ability to respond to these issues in a way that takes into account the views of Canadians. Budget 2018 commitments will be highlighted alongside an overview of key existing initiatives and plans that support the recommendations in the Committee's report.

The Government has reviewed the Committee's report and carefully considered its recommendations, which are of great significance to Canadians. The Government of Canada will address the recommendations presented by the Committee under the following themes: 1) Federal Actions, 2) Indigenous Affairs, 3) Education and Awareness, 4) Data and Evidence, and 5) Law Enforcement.

Federal Actions

The Government of Canada agrees with the Report's finding that the federal government needs to take an active role in addressing systemic racism and religious discrimination. The Government is already engaged in a number of activities that pursue this goal. Some of these current initiatives originated in Canada's Action Plan Against Racism (CAPAR), which was a five-year plan launched in March 2005 as the Government of Canada's horizontal approach to addressing issues of racism and discrimination. While the program sunset in March 2010 under the previous government, some initiatives continued as originally conceived, such as the Nationally Standardized Data Collection Strategy on Hate-Motivated Crime Initiative and the Racism Free Workplace Strategy. Two other initiatives were subsumed under other programming. The Welcoming Communities Initiative which focused on creating connections between newcomers and Canadians, eliminating barriers to integration by creating welcoming communities, and educating against racism was integrated into Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's (IRCC) streamlined settlement approach. The Department of Justice's grants and contributions funding for CAPAR was moved under a larger umbrella program called the Justice Partnership Innovation Program. This program supports activities that respond to the changing conditions affecting Canadian justice policy, such as by supporting newly reformed justice systems or improving the delivery of justice services, in collaboration with organizations and other levels of government.

The Government of Canada recognizes that institutional discrimination exists and that the federal government has a role to play in addressing these issues to ensure our

institutions are inclusive and reflect the diversity of our country. Recognizing that more needs to be done, in Budget 2018, the Government announced \$23 million over two years to provide increased funds for the Multiculturalism Program administered by Canadian Heritage. This will include support for community engagement on a new anti-racism approach that reflects the need to update CAPAR to consider the many realities that communities face today. The Multiculturalism Inter-Action grants and contributions program provides funding for community engagement and development projects that promote intercultural and interfaith understanding and equal opportunities in all spheres of society. The latest Inter-Action call for proposals, issued in February 2017, prioritized funding for projects that work toward the elimination of discrimination, racism and prejudice, among other issues. From 2015-2016 to 2017-2018, over \$17 million in Inter-Action funding has been approved for a range of projects delivered by various organizations across Canada. Funded projects include multi-year initiatives with components that focus on capacity building, anti-racism, education and/or awareness. As an example, \$154,000 in funding was recently approved for the non-profit organization *Black History Ottawa* to implement a multi-year project entitled *Connecting the Dots*, which aims to educate Canadians about the various African communities across Canada, while encouraging participants to learn and apply best practices in combating racism. The project will feature a series of activities including a conference, case studies and tool-kit resources to improve the understanding of the African Diaspora in Canada. It is anticipated that approximately 500 community ambassadors and 1,500 community members from various provinces will be involved.

Engagement activities will build on the Government's existing work on these issues and ensure that anti-racism measures are implemented in a way that respects, and is informed by, the views of Canadians, key stakeholders and, most importantly, those who are most likely to be impacted by racism and religious discrimination. A key objective will be to determine and apply the best community and evidence based approaches to addressing these complex and multi-faceted issues, in line with the emphasis that many Committee witnesses placed on the importance of community engagement. This will also provide an opportunity to strengthen collaboration between the federal government and partners in civil society on these important issues.

The Government is also committed to addressing the challenges faced by Black Canadians as demonstrated in Budget 2018's announcement of \$19 million to enhance local community supports for Black youth at risk and to develop research in support of more culturally focused mental health programs in Black Canadian communities. These efforts will also be supported by a more robust commitment to disaggregate various data sets by race to enhance our understanding of major issues impacting racialized Canadians. Given the importance of adopting a multijurisdictional approach to respond effectively to the challenges of systemic racism and all forms of religious discrimination including Islamophobia, the Government will also endeavor to strengthen its collaboration with provincial and territorial governments, including through the existing network of Federal, Provincial and Territorial Officials Responsible for Multiculturalism Issues. These efforts will encourage greater federal, provincial and territorial

collaboration, and enable best practices and lessons learned to be shared with a view to enhancing the quality and focus of anti-racism and inclusion efforts at these levels. For instance, federal, provincial and territorial (FPT) ministers responsible for human rights met for the first time in nearly 30 years to discuss key priorities of FPT governments in relation to Canada's international human rights obligations. Ministers affirmed support for holding future FPT Human Rights Ministerial meetings and agreed to enhance FPT collaboration.

Other federal initiatives also demonstrate the Government's commitment to combating various forms of discrimination. The reinstatement of the Court Challenges Program will enable Canadians, including racialized Canadians and religious minorities, to hold the government to account to respect official languages and fundamental human rights. This program has a budget of \$5 million and is designed to provide financial support to Canadians to access the courts for the litigation of test cases of national significance, to help clarify and assert certain constitutional and quasi-constitutional official language rights and human rights in Canada. Additionally, Public Safety Canada funds research and programming on hate speech and related issues, in the context of efforts to prevent and counter all forms of radicalization to violence. Formerly under the Kanishka Project, and now through the Community Resilience Fund administered by the Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of violence, this research and programming helps identify good practices and assess their effectiveness. Public Safety Canada's Security Infrastructure Program also supports communities at risk of being targeted by hate-motivated crime with the enhancement of their security infrastructure, including in places of worship, educational institutions and community centers. Furthermore, the Legislated Employment Equity Program under the *Employment Equity Act*, continues to promote, support and enhance employment equity across federal government organizations for four designated groups (women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities).

The federal government is also taking steps to progressively implement the right of every Canadian to access adequate housing. The National Housing Strategy prioritizes the most vulnerable populations and includes initiatives and activities that are expected to improve housing outcomes among these groups and will include them in the policy and program development process. For example, a Federal Housing Advocate will enable vulnerable groups to raise systemic issues or barriers they may face in accessing adequate housing; and a Community-Based Tenant Initiative will provide funding to local organizations that help vulnerable people in housing need, so that they are better represented and able to participate in housing policy and project decision-making.

While these initiatives contribute to a more inclusive Canada in a number of areas, it is clear that more needs to be done to ensure that before implementing a new program or policy, we understand and consider its impact on diverse groups. To this end, a key component of the Government's approach to addressing racism and discrimination is to apply Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) to all policy and program decisions. GBA+ is recognized as a key intersectional analytical process that accounts for multiple identity

factors – such as gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age, and mental or physical disability – and enables evidence-based decision-making benefiting all Canadians. As such, with GBA+, the Government is already implementing a lens that takes intersectionality (race and ethnicity, among other factors) into account in a comprehensive manner to advance diversity and inclusion.

Through Budget 2018, the Government made a strong commitment to GBA+ as a key analytical tool to advance diversity and inclusion in Canada by announcing plans to introduce legislation that will enshrine the requirement to apply GBA+ to future budgetary and financial management processes. The Government also made a concrete commitment toward ensuring that the impacts of individual budget proposals on different groups of people are understood, supporting better policy-making, priority-setting and decision-making. Applying a GBA+ lens to public policy helps identify and challenge harmful stereotypes, and can help break down systemic racism and religious discrimination in Canada. These commitments will ensure that intersecting identity factors remain key considerations for future governments and signal the importance of respecting diversity and an inclusive society.

The Government continues to build GBA+ capacity across federal institutions. Despite significant progress, the quality and application of GBA+ across government needs continuous improvement. Status of Women Canada, as the centre of expertise on GBA+, will continue to work closely with central agencies and other federal institutions to ensure that departments and agencies are supported in their efforts to fully integrate GBA+ in their daily work.

Recognizing that the issues of racism and religious discrimination are best addressed through a multifaceted approach, the Government also supports organizations that have a shared mission to combat racism and discrimination in the Canadian society, such as the Urban Alliance on Race Relations. In line with the Committee's recommendation for the Government to facilitate, support, and fund efforts across Canada dedicated to capacity building for communities; and to strengthen community involvement, civic inclusion, and leadership development, funding has been approved for an Urban Alliance on Race Relations project entitled *Building Bridges Between Muslims and Allies*. Project activities will create conversations about Muslims, the impact of Islamophobia, and ways to reduce discrimination and anti-black racism, with the objective of breaking down barriers within and between communities. The project will be aimed at members of various communities, such as Muslims of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds, Black, LGBTQ2 and disabled Canadians. The project seeks to engage over 60 participants from Calgary, Vancouver, and Toronto.

To further support community capacity building efforts, part of the new funding announced in Budget 2018 for the Multiculturalism Program will contribute to the development of projects designed to strengthen communities across Canada. These would complement other initiatives that support community capacity building. Public Safety's Canada Centre for Community Engagement and the Prevention of Violence (Canada

Centre), for example, provides capacity building support through the Community Resilience Fund, which supports the development of local multi agency partnerships and the growing community of professional practitioners and civil society actors who are involved in assessment, prevention and intervention in cases of violent extremism, including hate-motivated activity. These initiatives are designed to leverage local expertise and resources to design and deliver programs appropriately tailored to the local community context.

Also, the Community Connections Stream of the Settlement Program at IRCC aims to build bridges between newcomers and host communities by supporting networks within the various dimensions of Canadian society. Community Connections programming helps to lessen feelings of isolation and marginalization among newcomers including vulnerable clients such as women, youth, seniors and LGBTQ2 individuals. IRCC currently supports a range of different approaches that aim to improve access to settlement services, address systemic barriers, and enhance the capacity of public institutions (e.g. schools, libraries) to address the needs of newcomers. This programming also fosters cross-cultural understanding and a sense of belonging. Matching of newcomers with long-time Canadians and established immigrants also supports settlement and integration needs.

The Government of Canada is also committed to assisting individuals who face barriers to equitable access to services and employment as a vital component of its anti-racism and anti-discrimination efforts. To support these efforts, the Government of Canada transfers nearly \$3 billion in annual funding to provinces and territories through bilateral Labour Market Transfer Agreements (LMTA), including the Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA), the Canada Job Fund Agreement and, the Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities. This support enables a range of programs to be offered, from skills training to career counselling and job search assistance. These programs help unemployed and underemployed Canadians develop and upgrade their skills to find and keep good quality jobs.

Budget 2017 committed to invest an additional \$1.8 billion over six years under the LMDAs, starting in 2017-2018, and to expand eligibility to help more Canadians access Employment Insurance-funded skills training and employment supports. These changes will allow provinces and territories to support a broader range of Canadians, helping more individuals find and keep good jobs—including those from underrepresented groups, such as persons with disabilities, women and Indigenous peoples.

Budget 2017 also announced the introduction of new Workforce Development Agreements. The new agreements will consolidate the Canada Job Fund Agreement, the Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities and the former Targeted Initiative for Older Workers. These agreements will be enhanced with additional funding totaling \$900 million over the next six years, starting in 2017-2018.

Additionally, Budget 2018 provides \$2 billion over five years, and \$408.2 million ongoing, to support the creation of a new Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program (ISET Program), replacing the former Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS). This includes incremental investments of \$447 million over five years, and \$99.4 million per year ongoing. The ISET Program, like ASETS, is a broad-based, foundational labour market program that provides a full continuum of services to Indigenous peoples and targets employment as the measure for success. It includes pre-employment training (e.g., literacy, numeracy and other essential skills) and more advanced training for skilled jobs. The ISET Program will have a greater focus on progress along the skills continuum and training leading to higher-quality and better paying jobs, and, based on consultations with Indigenous partners, will have a distinctions-based approach, recognizing the needs of First Nations, Inuit, and the Métis. Training is available to Indigenous peoples across Canada through a network of 85 Indigenous organizations that design and deliver programs and services at over 600 points of service. Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) is also working to develop a Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy that will build on and align with strategies implemented by provinces, territories, and municipalities, set targets for poverty reduction, measure progress, and report publicly on results. ESDC has engaged broadly with Canadians to inform the development of the Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy through Ministerial roundtables, the Tackling Poverty Together research project, community-level conversations, officials-led consultation, and broad online engagement with Canadians.

As part of the Poverty Reduction Strategy engagement, roundtables were hosted in Halifax and Toronto to discuss issues related to poverty in racialized communities, including one specifically for the Black community that was held in Toronto in September 2017. Some of the key themes and recommendations to emerge from these roundtables and from the other engagement activities include: the implementation of a new multi-dimensional definition of poverty; targeted resources to address the issue of the racialization of poverty in Canada; looking at policies through a race-equity lens (e.g., for accessing affordable housing); and seeking community input to address growing concerns about racial profiling impacting Black, Indigenous and other racialized families.

The Minister of Families, Children and Social Development is mandated to “work with the Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs to launch consultations with provinces and territories and Indigenous Peoples on a National Early Learning and Childcare Framework as a first step towards delivering affordable, high-quality, flexible and fully inclusive child care”. In collaboration with Indigenous peoples, the Government has undertaken a comprehensive engagement process on Indigenous early learning and child care. Throughout 2017, over 100 engagement activities were conducted across the country by Indigenous organizations and the Government of Canada, reaching over 3,000 participants through town halls, regional and national meetings, and online surveys.

Informed by this engagement, the Government is now working with Indigenous partners to co-develop an Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework. The

Framework will reflect the unique cultures and needs of First Nations, Inuit and Métis children and families across Canada, and, once approved, will provide a guide for communities, program administrators, service providers, policy makers and governments to work toward achieving a shared vision.

Service Canada also plays an important role in ensuring equitable access to services for all Canadians. Service Canada's Community Outreach and Liaison Service, for example, engages with communities to identify the appropriate mechanism to improve access to services and remediate gaps in access caused by geography or other socio-economic barriers. For example, in order to proactively address gaps in uptake among Indigenous Canadians, Service Canada and the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) collaborated to increase awareness and uptake of the Canada Child Benefit and other benefits. The 12 month collaboration resulted in the engagement of 698 on-reserve and Northern communities and funding to continue this work was announced in Budget 2018.

The Government of Canada also recognizes the importance of integrating immigrants into the labour market and has been working with provincial and territorial governments, through the Forum of Labour Market Ministers, to improve the integration of skilled immigrants. Since 2009, A Pan Canadian Framework for the Assessment and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications has provided federal, provincial and territorial governments with a strategic vision for their collaborative efforts to advance foreign credentials/qualifications recognition systems across Canada, ensuring that internationally trained individuals can more quickly apply their skills in the Canadian labour market. The Government of Canada is committed to collaborating with provincial and territorial governments, regulators and assessment agencies to better align information, supports and assessment in the licensing process with changes to the immigration selection processes.

Furthermore, the Government proposes to ensure that the rights of temporary foreign workers in Canada are protected and enforced by strengthening the program compliance regime through the introduction of unannounced inspections, as announced in Budget 2018. The Government also proposes to establish, on a pilot basis, a network of support organizations for temporary foreign workers dealing with potential abuse by their employers.

Additionally, since 2014, IRCC has been working with the provinces and territories on the implementation of Helping Immigrants Succeed, a multilateral plan endorsed by the Forum of Ministers Responsible for Immigration (FMRI), to improve the social and economic settlement and integration outcomes of newcomers. As part of the plan, the Government of Canada is working closely with provinces and territories to increase engagement with employers to support newcomer labour market integration. All parties have been sharing and identifying effective approaches to increase the capacity of employers to understand and appreciate the education and experience acquired by newcomers abroad, including supports for developing inclusive hiring and organizational practices that facilitate newcomer attraction and retention in the workplace.

The Government also believes in the importance of a strong and equitably represented federal public service that is reflective of Canada's diversity. To this end, the Public Service Commission of Canada (PSC) has implemented a variety of federal initiatives to foster diverse and equitable hiring within the Federal Public Service. Such initiatives include, for example, the Aboriginal Centre of Expertise (ACE), whose mandate is to reduce barriers to employment for Indigenous peoples. ACE works with Pilimmaksaivik (the Federal Centre of Excellence for Inuit Employment in Nunavut) to develop recruitment strategies to attract and retain Indigenous candidates.

Other efforts include the nationwide Indigenous Student Employment Opportunity initiative to expand efforts to recruit and retain Indigenous young people into the federal public service. The new inventory will provide Indigenous students in all regions of Canada with work experience close to where they live or go to school. In addition, the PSC engages in outreach to employment equity associations and linguistic minority communities, with the aim of increasing application rates of employment equity and official language minority group members.

The PSC also offers standardized assessment instruments through its Personnel Psychology Centre for use by public service organizations. These tests are developed with diverse groups and are monitored and maintained with diversity in mind. Unsupervised Internet Testing allows persons with disabilities to use their own assistive technologies from home and removes travel and cost barriers for individuals living in remote communities. Additionally, final test versions go through a 'fairness review'; ensuring they are culturally appropriate and use plain language. The performance of employment equity group members on the tests is monitored to ensure that they do not pose a barrier to their employment. Standardized administration and scoring ensures that all individuals are treated equitably. The PSC also releases multiple, adapted formats of its tests to accommodate individual needs.

The examples above address inclusion in different ways and highlight work that is currently underway and anticipated over the coming years. The Government of Canada remains committed to meaningful, evidence-based, community-involved and whole-of-government initiatives in the pursuit of equality and growth for all Canadians.

Indigenous Affairs

The Government of Canada is committed to implement the 94 Calls to Action presented by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in its final report, released in December 2015. This includes a commitment, announced in May 2016, to fully implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Government of Canada takes reconciliation seriously and is working to advance it to renew a nation-to-nation, Inuit to Crown and government-to-government relationship with Indigenous peoples, based on recognition of rights, respect, cooperation and partnership. Actions that have been taken to date to advance reconciliation include:

- The establishment of permanent bilateral mechanisms announced in December 2016, with each of the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and the Métis National Council to advance distinctions-based policies and shared priorities through annual meetings with the Prime Minister and key federal Ministers. Shared priorities under these mechanisms include action in several areas identified by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in its Calls to Actions to close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada, such as housing, health and wellness, early learning and child care, employment and Indigenous languages.
- On December 6, 2016, the Prime Minister announced that Canada will co-develop with Indigenous Peoples, an Indigenous Languages Act to preserve, protect and revitalize Indigenous languages.
- In June 2017, Canadian Heritage and three National Indigenous Organizations launched the co-development of the national First Nations, Inuit and Métis languages legislation and agreed on a collaborative engagement process.
- The creation of a Ministerial-level working group in February 2017 on the Review of Laws and Policies Related to Indigenous Peoples.
- The dissolution of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, and the creation of two new Departments – Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs and Indigenous Services – to increase the government’s capacity to function on a distinctions-basis and to implement the spirit and intent of existing and future agreements with Indigenous peoples, as announced in August 2017. Indigenous Services Canada was created in December 2017.
- On February 14, 2018, the Government of Canada announced the commitment to a national engagement with First Nations, Inuit and Métis people that will help develop a Recognition and Implementation of Rights Framework, which will ensure that the starting premise for all federal government action is the recognition of Indigenous rights. It is intended that by using recognition of Indigenous rights as a framework for all government actions, priorities such as education and Indigenous languages can be implemented more affectively to serve reconciliation and advance implementation of the TRC Calls to Action.

The Government of Canada has made advances in implementing several of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action within its purview of responsibility. Advancing implementation of all of the Calls to Action will continue and the federal government will work with external partners (e.g., provinces/territories and other sectors) to achieve tangible and real results towards full implementation. There is also an on-going commitment to report to the public on a regular basis on progress made towards implementation of each of the Calls to Action.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission called on the Government of Canada to establish a National Council for Reconciliation, Call to Action #53, in partnership with Indigenous Peoples to monitor, evaluate and report to Parliament and Canadians on progress towards reconciliation across all levels and sectors of Canadian society. The Government of Canada has taken action and an Interim Board was appointed by the Governor-in-Council in December 2017, chaired by Grand Chief Wilton Littlechild, former Commissioner of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Interim Board has a 6-month mandate to lead an engagement process that will result in recommendations on the scope and mandate of the National Council for Reconciliation.

The Government of Canada is actively engaged with all sectors of Canadian society in order to advance reconciliation. These aims are central to the Government's efforts to work with partners to see all of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action implemented.

On February 22, 2017, the Prime Minister announced the establishment of the Working Group of Ministers on the Review of Laws and Policies related to Indigenous Peoples in order to ensure the alignment of federal laws and policies with the Constitution Act, 1982; the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action; and international human rights obligations, including the United Nations Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples. The Government of Canada intends to fulfill its commitment to implement the UN Declaration through this review of laws and policies, as well as through parallel processes.

The Working Group is taking a principled approach to the review, guided by the Principles Respecting the Government of Canada's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples. The Principles support many rights recognized in the UN Declaration, including the right to self-determination and free, prior and informed consent.

The Working Group has already undertaken engagement and review on a number of laws and policies, including implementation of the Declaration and will continue to meet with Indigenous groups and to support their ministerial colleagues in undertaking revisions to laws, policies, and operational practices.

The federal government has voted in favour of Private Member Bill C-262 at second reading in the House of Commons, which proposes the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples through legislation and aims to ensure consistency between Canadian law and the Declaration. Bill C-262 builds on other measures that the government has taken to implement the Declaration.

Canada is also committed to the full implementation of Jordan's Principle. To date, funding coverage for over 73,000 requests for health, social and/or educational services, supports and products has been approved. In July 2016, Jordan's Principle – the Child First Initiative was announced to make \$382.5 million available over three years (2016/2017 – 2018/2019) to: fund external First Nations organizations to provide service

coordination; create a Service Access Resolution Fund to meet the health, social and educational needs of First Nations children living on and off reserve; collect and analyze service and financial data; and ensure adequate human resource capacity to implement the Initiative.

Work is underway with First Nations to develop a longer-term approach to Jordan's Principle. Engagement with First Nations partners as well as policy and research activities will support the longer term approach.

As part of the four Canadian Human Rights Tribunal rulings (January, April, September 2016 and May 26, 2017 amended November 2, 2017) concerning Jordan's principle, Canada continues to report on its compliance. The last compliance report was submitted in November 2017. The next compliance report is due to the Tribunal by May 15, 2018.

Indigenous Services Canada continues to promote collaboration between provinces, First Nations regional organizations, and the Department, through funding for formal tripartite education partnership arrangements. The goal is to develop working relationships between officials and educators in provincial systems and in regional First Nation organizations and schools. There are currently 12 tripartite partnerships Memorandum of Understandings across Canada.

The Department has signed the Anishinabek Education Agreement transferring K-12 education jurisdiction to 23 Ontario First Nation communities comprising 25,000 people and 2,000 students.

The Manitoba First Nations School System, the very first First Nation School Board of its kind, has officially started its operations in July 2017, benefitting 1,800 students in 10 communities.

Education and Awareness

The Government of Canada recognizes that education and awareness are integral components of an effective approach for combating racism and promoting inclusion. In recognition of this, the Government continues to support a range of related initiatives, including through its Black History Month and Asian Heritage Month programming which celebrates the legacy and contributions of Black and Asian Canadians. Numerous projects with anti-racism and anti-religious discrimination education and awareness elements have been, and continue to be, funded through the Multiculturalism Program and other initiatives. One such project, for example, is the *Our Diversity Now* project, which ran from September 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018. The project promoted tolerance and diversity through engagement and interaction between youth representing various religious communities. It also established a Canadian Interregional Interfaith Youth Network to ensure the long-term sustainability of the project's results. This is a clear example of one way in which the Government of Canada facilitates, supports, and funds

efforts across Canada to initiate interfaith and intercultural dialogue, consistent with the Committee's recommendation on this issue. The increased Multiculturalism Program funding announced in Budget 2018 will also support this recommendation by funding projects that promote better understanding between communities and bring together interfaith leaders and experts, among others, to find new ways to collaborate and combat discrimination.

Building on the Multiculturalism Program's support for initiatives that promote interfaith and intercultural dialogue, the Office of Human Rights, Freedoms and Inclusion (OHRFI) also regularly and meaningfully engages with diaspora and faith and belief communities, civil society, academics and the broader international community. OHRFI regularly creates spaces for interfaith exchanges and collaboration. For example, on October 27, 2017, on the occasion of International Religious Freedom Day, Parliamentary Secretary Omar Alghabra hosted a roundtable discussion between the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, Dr. Ahmed Shaheed, and a diverse cross-section of Canadian faith and civil society organizations. This event helped generate interfaith networking and engagement, and informed Canada's approach to these issues, nationally and internationally.

The Government also agrees with the Committee's emphasis on the benefits of sharing information on, and learning from, best practices for promoting inclusion and countering systemic racism and religious discrimination, including Islamophobia. To this end, the Government will strengthen its commitment to learn from best practices, including by doing more to seek out and leverage mechanisms, such as the Canadian Race Relations Foundation's Best Practices in Race Relations Initiative and the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination's highlighting of best practices at the municipal level. Through the community engagement announced in Budget 2018, the Government's approach will be informed by the views of the communities most affected.

Recognizing that systemic racism and religious discrimination are complex and require efforts from a range of actors to find solutions, the Government agrees that it should take a strong leadership role. In October 2016, the federal government welcomed the United Nations' Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, and has since introduced several new measures which address some of the issues described in their report. It has done so, for instance, by officially recognizing the International Decade for People of African Descent, and responded by committing \$19 million to address the challenges faced by Black Canadians. The announcement of a new Centre for Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics, and an Indigenous Statistical Capacity Development Initiative in Budget 2018, affirm the Government's commitment to address gaps in the availability of disaggregated data on intersecting identities. In the coming months and years, these and other initiatives, will contribute to Canada's ongoing work to promote inclusion and to address key issues, such as Islamophobia and other forms of religious discrimination.

The Government of Canada also recognizes the importance of media literacy and media education and will continue to work with media and digital platforms to promote media literacy in Canada. While media and digital platforms have many advantages and benefits, including with respect to creation and cultural development, there is a risk of them being used to disseminate fake news, hate speech and cyber bullying. This is why it is important both to educate and equip Canadians on the use of media platforms through media education. The Government of Canada encourages the use of media and digital platforms to engage, educate and build media literacy. In this regard, partnerships like the two year initiative between Facebook Canada and Mediasmarts to promote digital literacy and media education are a step in the right direction.

We appreciate the Committee's suggestion for educational materials to be developed with a focus on fostering cross cultural and interfaith awareness and understanding. Hate crime data, research and various Committee witnesses have all highlighted various ways in which religious communities experience discrimination, and the Government continues to take these issues seriously. It is for this reason that intercultural and interfaith understanding continues to be a key priority for Multiculturalism Program funding, and why projects are funded with the objective of promoting diversity and inclusion by encouraging positive interaction between cultural, religious and ethnic communities in Canada.

The Government's strong support for educational initiatives can also be seen in its Plan for Education and Skills Development. As outlined in Budget 2018, one of the Plan's objectives is to improve diversity in the research community through investments in the granting councils, data collection initiatives, early career researchers and new gender equity planning. Furthermore, as part of Canada's Innovation and Skills Plan, the National Research Council will focus on increasing the representation of women, youth, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities among its researchers. As indicated in the Budget report, this includes increased outreach to diverse groups of Canadians so they are fully aware of its programs and the opportunity to participate.

The January 29, 2017 terrorist attack on worshippers at the Islamic Cultural Centre in Quebec City was a tragic reminder of where racism and religious discrimination, including Islamophobia, can lead. It underscores the importance of proactively promoting diversity, equity and empathy. Canadians must not forget this tragic event, nor those whose lives were taken, who were injured, and their family members. Coupled with the fact that 10% of all police-reported hate crimes in 2016 were anti-Muslim, this shooting will continue to remind us of the collective need to do more and be better in response to hatred. The persistence of racism, Islamophobia and other forms of religious discrimination in Canadian society, such as in the form of hate crimes, various race-based inequalities or workplace discrimination, must be met with an unwavering commitment to the full participation of Canadians in the economic, civic, and social spheres across Canada. To this end, and as a party to the United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, the

Government will continue to raise awareness of our efforts to tackle all forms of racism and religious discrimination, including Islamophobia, in Canada.

Data and Evidence

There is a considerable amount of evidence on the persistence of racism and discrimination against several communities, including Muslim, Jewish, Black and Indigenous. Statistics Canada reports that, on average, about 1,360 hate crime incidents have been reported annually by police since 2009. In 2016, approximately one-third of all hate crimes targeted religious groups (e.g., 10% against Muslim and 16% against Jewish peoples) while crimes targeting Black populations remained the most common hate crime related to race or ethnicity at 15% of all hate crimes. The Government acknowledges that in order to fully understand the issues and challenges confronting Canada's increasingly diverse population, comprehensive and high quality data is required to better monitor and target policies to eliminate discrimination and inequalities. As the national statistical agency, Statistics Canada is a leader in data collection and dissemination related to the ethno-cultural and linguistic characteristics of the population across social domains, such as labour, income, justice, education and health.

Statistics Canada will continue to lead in this area. In cooperation with other federal departments and agencies, Statistics Canada will identify needs for new data and analysis and will make every effort to find new ways of using existing data to improve monitoring and evaluation of the implementation and impact of policies to eliminate racial discrimination, inequality, and the racialization of poverty.

This work will be further supported by the Centre for Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics. Budget 2018 proposed new funding of \$6.7 million over five years, beginning in 2018–2019, and \$0.6 million per year ongoing, for Statistics Canada to create this new Centre. In line with a significant number of suggestions raised by witnesses who appeared before the Committee, the Centre will work to analyze and disseminate data on gender, visible minorities and other intersecting identities to understand the barriers different groups face, along with how best to support them and enrich our understanding of social, economic, financial and environmental issues. The Centre's GBA+ data hub will support evidence based policy development and decision-making within the federal government and externally.

As further evidence of the Government's commitment to strengthen evidence-based policy making, additional investments were announced in Budget 2018 for the Department of Finance Canada to work with Statistics Canada and Status of Women on the development of indicators and data to assess Canada's progress on achieving shared growth and gender equality objectives. Additionally, \$5 million has been allocated for Status of Women Canada to undertake research and data collection, with one of the first projects being an analysis of the challenges faced by visible minority and newcomer women in finding employment in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

The Committee's recommendation for disaggregated data collection is also in line with ESDC's current priority of implementing a departmental data strategy. The ESDC Data Strategy includes a focus on improving access to data and, in the future, could enable the identification of disaggregated data within ESDC that could be used to improve monitoring and evaluation of the implementation and impact of policies to eliminate racial discrimination, inequality, and the racialization of poverty. Budget 2018 proposes an investment of \$12.1 million over five years, and \$1.5 million per year thereafter, to address key gaps in poverty measurement in Canada. This investment recognizes the importance of poverty data in evidence-based decision-making by all levels of government. It will help to ensure that poverty data is inclusive of all Canadians, that data on various dimensions of poverty are captured, and that the data is robust and timely. In the realm of sports, Sport Canada is reviewing its data collection strategy to incorporate improved tracking of disaggregated data, to better understand the degree to which sport is welcoming to underrepresented groups, such as Indigenous Peoples, visible minorities, women and girls.

As well, the systematic collection of disaggregated data on key immigrant economic and social outcomes is the core mandate of IRCC's research and data development. The department works in close collaboration with Statistics Canada on leading national surveys, including the 2016 Census, the General Social Survey (various cycles), Labour Force Survey and Canadian Community Health Survey. IRCC also conducts periodic in-depth research and analysis using in-house databases and data linkages with Statistics Canada, to gain important insights on immigrant outcomes and trends over time. For example, the Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB), which combines linked immigration landing records and tax data files, is a comprehensive data source on the economic outcomes of the immigrant tax filer population in Canada since 1980. The IMDB provides detailed and reliable information on the employment income of all categories of immigrants over a period long enough to assess the impact of individual characteristics, such as education and knowledge of French or English, on long-term immigrant outcomes. This knowledge is instrumental to inform policies aimed at reducing persistent barriers to equal access to services and eliminating systemic discrimination faced by immigrants and visible minorities as they strive to contribute to Canadian society and the economy.

There is also a recognized need for better data on hate crime and hate incidents to help ensure the safety and inclusion of individuals living in Canada and to inform policy and programming decisions. Statistics Canada, together with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), other police services in Canada and the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, has established standards for the uniform collection of data on hate crimes in Canada. The development of these standards began in 2002 in preparation for Canada's Action Plan Against Racism and resulted in the launch of uniform data collection in 2005 through the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey (UCR). Standards include a uniform definition of "hate crime" that is based on the *Criminal Code of Canada*. Supporting police services to be aware of these standards and to report consistent data has been accomplished through training.

The Government of Canada affirms the need for an extensive source of data to provide on-going information on the nature and extent of hate crime and hate incidents. It is important to continue to collect information regarding the safety and inclusion of individuals living in Canada and to inform policy and programming decisions with quality data.

Statistics Canada's Uniform Crime Reporting Survey is Canada's national database on police-reported hate crimes in Canada. All crime data, including hate crime information, are reported on a monthly basis to Statistics Canada and released to the public on an annual basis after a validation process. While this source provides a comprehensive account of crimes both reported to the police and deemed as hate crimes according to uniform national standards, this source does not include those crimes that are not reported to police or non-criminal hate incidents.

Statistics Canada commits to working with Public Safety Canada and the Department of Justice Canada on the coordination and creation of extra-legal reporting options in response to Recommendation 8. This work will ensure the inclusion of a national standardized database for any extra-legal reporting options. Also, the creation of a Centre for Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics, for which new funding for Statistics Canada was proposed in Budget 2018, will further support analysis and dissemination of hate-related data.

The Government of Canada is also aware of the importance of continuously generating relevant and up to-date research on hate crime *offenders* in order to inform policies for counteracting hate and preventing hate-related criminality. With support from the Multiculturalism Program, Statistics Canada has released annual reports and data on hate crimes which are available to the public. The UCR 2.2 currently captures nationally comprehensive and disaggregated detail on victims of hate crime incidents collected from municipal and provincial police services and the RCMP. There are, however, a number of data gaps, which in turn make it difficult for research and analysis on offending patterns, impact, and effectiveness of prevention and intervention approaches. Information from courts about when hate is factored into sentencing is limited, and reporting practices by law enforcement can vary significantly from one jurisdiction to another. As well, there is limited and inconsistent data from victims. The General Social Survey on Victimization occurs only once every five years, with a limited sample, and there is significant variation across jurisdictions in avenues for individuals to report hate incidents (as opposed to hate crimes). Accordingly, Public Safety will work with partners at the federal level, including with the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics at Statistics Canada, as well as with other levels of government and experts and stakeholders outside government, to develop more effective strategies for gathering data and conducting analysis. Such strategies could include supporting Statistics Canada efforts to improve the quality and quantity of data provided by law enforcement and courts, including to support more disaggregated accounts of the characteristics of victims and offenders.

Further, the Government of Canada accepts that while the police-reported data can inform Canadians as to characteristics targeted by hate, it provides few characteristics of the *motivational origins and intentions* behind hate crimes as well as their impacts on victims, all of which may be of assistance in developing effective policies to counteract the commission of hate crimes and in building community resilience to hate-motivated incidents against Canadians. To this end, more in-depth qualitative and quantitative research by specialists in this area is required. Public Safety Canada and the Public Safety Portfolio Agencies, the Department of Justice, and the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics at Statistics Canada will work together to develop a research agenda to address the specific characteristics and motivations of hate crime offenders as well as the needs of hate crime victims.

For example, early work funded by the Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence (Canada Centre) is supporting data collection and analysis, including to better understand dynamics of hate speech online, the patterns of recruitment and involvement of those joining movements such as Daesh and extreme far-right groups, and what are promising practices to counter such dynamics, from counter-speech and alternative narratives, to reaching out to those at risk.

The Government of Canada will continue to facilitate the types of academic research projects currently being funded by the Canada Centre, Defence Research and Development Canada's Centre for Security Science, and other research funding organizations, that are directed towards understanding the trajectories of individuals who commit hate-driven violence and join hate groups.

The Government's continued support and funding for research on racism and discrimination can be used to inform public policy, which is in line with the Committee's recommendations. The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) promotes and supports post-secondary based research and research training in the social sciences and humanities. This includes research on racism and discrimination, topics for which SSHRC awarded an estimated \$14 million in grants and scholarships between 2013 and 2018. SSHRC-funded research stimulates dialogue on socio-economic issues of importance to Canadians. Further, the publication of research findings helps to inform policy makers at all levels of government, with public servants also having the opportunity under various SSHRC grants to partner with academics on research projects of relevance to public policy. While SSHRC does not generally prioritize specific research areas as funding priorities, the agency fully anticipates that post-secondary based researchers in Canada and their partners will continue to apply for and receive funding support for research of relevance to racism and religious discrimination.

Law Enforcement

The Government of Canada recognizes the importance of having safe and well-publicized options for victims to report hate crimes and hate incidents, to support efforts

to obtain justice and appropriate services and to ensure officials and the public are well-aware of the nature and frequency with which such events are occurring.

Currently, the specific hate crimes captured in the *Criminal Code of Canada*—namely the three hate propaganda offences (Sections 318 and 319) and the hate crimes of mischief—can be reported for investigation to municipal, provincial or federal police services in the area. Additionally, police across the country are instructed to record evidence of hate as a motivating factor for the commission of other offences for capture in the UCR 2.2. RCMP investigators are, in particular, required to indicate whether or not any alleged offence was motivated by hate, regardless of incident type.

However, the Government of Canada recognizes that the effectiveness of these hate speech laws requires law enforcement agencies to have training, preparedness, and capacity to report and investigate hate crimes, both offline and in the cyber domain.

The Government of Canada additionally recognizes an extensive need for law enforcement officers and other members to be well-trained in racial and cultural sensitivity and in handling possible hate crimes that are reported in fair, attentive, complete, and racially and culturally sensitive ways. The RCMP additionally recognizes that Canada is a diverse country and, in keeping with the RCMP's mission, vision and values, members are to be fair, attentive, understanding and to be racially and culturally sensitive at all times. At present, significant effort is being made to develop and supply cultural competence training for law enforcement agencies and their members. For instance, online training courses developed by federal and police agencies on a range of relevant topics including racial bias in policing, hate crime awareness and hate crime investigation, are offered at low cost or free to Canadian police forces across the country on Canada's accredited, subsidized police training network.

As well, since November 2006, all RCMP Cadets receive training on unconscious bias, intercultural sensitivity, human rights and discrimination, and the historical relationship between settlers and Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Operating RCMP members are provided further training in bias awareness, diversity mindfulness, Indigenous and First Nations Awareness, culturally-specific forms of violence, and an in-class cultural awareness course, with the RCMP in Québec additionally offered an in-class course on cultural competence.

However, the Government of Canada realizes that training of law enforcement professionals in cultural sensitivity varies widely by agency and that cultural sensitivity might be difficult to internalize for individuals. The Government nonetheless continues to remain committed to supporting the development of appropriate tools and training to law enforcement to sensitize them on the importance of racial and cultural sensitivity. As such, through Budget 2017, the Government has committed \$2.4 million over five years, and \$0.6 million per year ongoing, to the RCMP to develop and deliver cultural competency and trauma-informed gender-based violence training for all RCMP employees.

Additionally, as part of ongoing work on a national strategy to counter radicalization to violence and its impacts on communities, Public Safety Canada will work with the RCMP and other relevant partners and sectors to explore further options for improving the availability and quality of training for law enforcement officers, including training for them to support communities on addressing hate crimes and hate incidents. Early work funded by Public Safety Canada's Canada Centre for Community Engagement and Prevention of Violence, (Canada Centre), through the Community Resilience Fund, is examining the use and effectiveness of some approaches to training frontline officers about issues of hate, polarization and violent extremism. Lessons learned in the course of this work, along with broader feedback from Canadians about the ways in which hatred and polarization can affect individuals and communities, will help inform the Canada Centre's work to develop a national strategy for countering radicalization to violence. It may also be possible to incorporate questions about more effective approaches to hate crime investigation through the community engagement on a new national anti-racism approach, given its focus on bringing together experts, community organizations, citizens and interfaith leaders to find new ways to collaborate and combat discrimination.

Beyond law enforcement options there are a number of available tools for gathering information on hate-related victimization. One of these tools is Statistics Canada's General Social Survey (GSS), which is conducted on five year cycles and asks a sample of 25,000 individuals aged 15 years and older in the provinces and the territories whether they have been a victim of eight specific crime types over the past year. Since 2009, the GSS has asked respondents if they perceive the offence committed against them as motivated by hate; and, if so, what they believe the motivation to have been.

Human Rights Commissions as well as reporting systems maintained by a range of Provincial committees and employment standards ministries, municipal police departments, municipal agencies, unions, and national non-profit organizations are also other platforms through which victims of hate incidents and racism and religious discrimination can report.

The Government of Canada acknowledges that available tools for reporting hate incidents are not consistent across jurisdictions and communities, and that the patchwork of available reporting options presents a confusing array to victims who may seek to report such incidents and to obtain support in recovering from their impacts. Accordingly, Public Safety Canada will continue to work with partners within and outside of government to explore ways to encourage more effective reporting options for hate-motivated incidents. In the meantime, the Department of Justice offers the Justice Canada Victims Fund for Non-Government Organizations seeking to create further reporting options and other services for victims of hate crimes and hate incidents.

Conclusion

The Government of Canada would like to reiterate its thanks to the members of

the Committee for their work, as well as to those who appeared before the Committee and to all other contributors who supported the Committee. The Government affirms its commitment to advance on these important issues in the pursuit of a more equitable and inclusive Canada.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Joly', with a stylized flourish at the end.

The Honourable Mélanie Joly, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Canadian Heritage