

EXCOM Speaking Notes

December 9, 2020

- We're well on our way on this journey.
- The Task Force is now on its 5th month and happy to announce that most of our team members will be in place this month.
- December is often a period of reflection for me. I don't think any of us truly know what 2020 had in store for us but here we are in December at the cusp of 2021.
- As the year comes to a close, I do feel a sense of pride in the work, the deep, meaningful conversations and the support that I have gotten from you as leaders.
- I think I came into this role with feeling overwhelmed at the Task at hand. There is no blue print to solving racism. While the challenges remain great, you all in your own ways have reminded me that we're in this together.
- Before I start balling my eyes out, today I do want to share 4 key highlights and hope to have a discussion afterwards.

1. Building through collaboration and engagement with employees, partners and stakeholders

- [Anti-Racism Advisory Board](#) was created and includes representation from most of the department.
 - Some of our key achievements to date have provided input to the Task Force's activities and direction, to the Anti-Racism survey, IRCC's draft Exit employee survey and the cross-promotion of anti-racism events and initiatives within their own networks.
 - I do also want to highlight the significant contributions of the individuals who have and continue to help me lead the charge on sub-committees that will delve deeper into the problem identification to inform strategies:
 - [REDACTED] from Transformation, TDSS
 - [REDACTED] from IN, OPS
 - [REDACTED] from HRB, Corporate Services
 - [REDACTED] from OPPB, OPS
 - [REDACTED] from DN, OPS
 - [REDACTED], CPPG, OPS – who in addition to her job is co-chair of the Anti-Racism Advisory Board and Middle Managers Community

- I'm still trying to fine tune the sector representation of this group – that is on my list in early 2021.
- Another early collaboration has been with other federal anti-racism
- [Anti-Racism Allies Network](#) was launched for information seekers, volunteers and influencers across the Department that are motivated in making these efforts a movement.
 - Giving folks a sense of being part of this movement is the promise to success and so IRCC allies and advocates are busy planning their activities for 2021. Some of their initiatives include Anti-Asian (model minority myth), Anti-Indigenous and tying them to other parts of the organization like the Indigenous Peoples Circle's activities.

2. Transparency and data

- [Anti-Racism Survey for all employees](#) (30% response rate) was launched to help drive anti-racism decisions within the department moving forward, in collaboration with the [Champion for the Circle for Visible Minorities](#).
- The 2020 Public Service Employee Survey will also be an opportunity to gather data.
- We're also planning focus groups, in collaboration with Communications and [REDACTED], Champion of Visible Minority circle. This will be to dig deeper into the experiences, thoughts and insights of racialized and non-racialized people.

3. Building trust in our Department

- We have held Trust Circle [conversations where we have learned](#) that the experience does align with management perspectives. Thus, we hope:
 - to create a safer space for our colleagues who are Black, Indigenous or other racialized groups to come together and discuss their experiences
- **Conflict Resolution** - building capacity to understand the systematic nature of racism will be important to help leaders set the tone, address harmful behaviours and
- **Strategy & concrete action** - working meeting scheduled for ADM Tactics on January 15 2020 which will be oriented towards strategy 2021 to 2023.

4. Lastly we're working with leaders to help them lead by example

- After [releasing a call for proposals](#) for anti-racism coaches for IRCC Executives to help them understand and sustain conversations on racism, we're happy to say that we found some coaches - [REDACTED] (QMR Consulting). We'll be strategizing with them on a path forward and hope to start their services in January 2021.
- So pleased to see other parts of IRCC to join the Task Force in this effort. For example,
 - Special mention OCR and the Middle Managers secretariat to create an anti-racism training series for middle managers. More to come on that!
 - Executive Leadership Committee who put on a lunch and learn on leading conversations about race – a peer to peer conversation
 - Integrated Corporate who put together an amazing panel discussion and key note address from former governor
- From these conversations – and SLIDO mood board, here are some of the types of questions and comments:
 - Do you think true reconciliation is possible?
 - How should we approach inter-provincial racism issues in Canada because the person was born in Quebec?
 - Colonialism has bred class inequality based on race. This has led to desperation and this has led to fraud. How can we guard against fraud w/o seeming racist?
 - I am struck by the descriptions of the emotional labour involved in 'not giving into anger' when under white gaze. What can white allies do in those moments?
 - Representation at the table is important. Hearing, respecting and understanding that voice is important. How do we move there. There seems to be resistance.
- There is also lots of comments of gratitude, hope and solidarity.

That being said, I do want to end on a few questions

- 1) What were your thoughts about the Diversity and Inclusion portion of the EX Summit
- 2) Some of you have had Trust Circle conversation and curious to your thoughts
- 3) As a community, what would like to achieve by Dec 2021? What kinds of conversations you think we'll be having then?