

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

African Nova Scotian Decade for People of African Descent Coalition responds to United Nations Working Group report on its mission to Canada

September 29, 2017

The African Nova Scotian Decade for People of African Descent Coalition welcomes the recent report from the United Nations Group of Working Experts on People of African Descent on its mission to Canada. More than 25 African Nova Scotian organizations presented to the Working Group in October 2016 and are pleased to see many of their concerns and recommendations reflected in the group's final report, along with a recognition of African Nova Scotians' distinct and long-standing place in Canadian history and society.

African Nova Scotians have made an enormous contribution to this province and country and yet continue to experience the legacy of enslavement, segregation and anti-Black racism. The coalition encourages municipal, provincial and national levels of government and public agencies to review the report carefully and work closely with African Nova Scotian communities and organizations to address its recommendations, including:

- Legally recognize African Canadians—and African Nova Scotians—as a distinct group who have made and continue to make profound economic, political, social, cultural and spiritual contributions to Canadian society.
- Institute mandatory collection of disaggregated data identifying where disparities exist for African Nova Scotians in all sectors, including education, employment, health, the justice system and the child welfare system.
- Develop a justice strategy to address the anti-Black racism within the criminal justice system.
- Immediately discontinue the practice of street checks, and all other forms of racial profiling.
- Address the over-representation of African Nova Scotian children in care.
- Strengthen Africentric education curricula, draw upon Africentric research and address discriminatory policies in education.
- Address barriers and inequities for newer Canadians, immigrant, refugees and migrant workers.
- Develop legislation to address environmental issues affecting African Nova Scotians.
- Resolve outstanding land claim issues affecting African Nova Scotian communities.

- Address barriers and inequities in access to health care and employment.
- Work with African Nova Scotians to consider reparations in a Nova Scotian context.

Since the October 2016 meeting with the Working Group, the local coalition representing a range of African Nova Scotian community groups is expanding and meets regularly. The coalition met in May with provincial deputy ministers to address areas of importance for African Nova Scotians, including those outlined above.

The coalition will continue to engage African Nova Scotians, government and other public agencies to address structural and systemic anti-Black racism and foster conditions where African Nova Scotian contributions are acknowledged, and our people and communities are recognized and supported as an integral part of Nova Scotia's past, present and future.

