

HS-A1-1

DATE: February 11, 2010

REPORT TITLE: **INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL
DISCRIMINATION IN PEEL**

FROM: Janet Menard, Commissioner of Human Services
Janette Smith, Commissioner of Health Services

RECOMMENDATION

That March 21, 2010 be proclaimed International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, as proposed in Appendix I of this report;

And further, that the Region of Peel review the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination, and consider endorsing its Common Declaration as provided in Appendix II of this report;

And further, that staff report back to Council within one year and annually thereafter on the progress of collaborative community efforts to address racism and oppression in Peel.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- In 1966, the United Nations General Assembly honoured the victims of the Sharpeville massacre by designating March 21st as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.
- On April 14 2009, following a community delegation, staff committed to work with Interim Place to proclaim March 21, 2010 International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.
- The Province's Roots of Youth Violence Report identifies racism as a major factor behind youth violence, and the implications are of concern to the Peel Youth Violence Prevention Network and others in the community.
- Some 30 municipalities in Canada have formed the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination, founded in 2005, which is endorsed by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and includes Toronto, Montreal, Winnipeg, Edmonton and Halifax.
- Staff propose joining with the United Way of Peel to work in partnership with existing organizations and coalitions that are currently addressing anti-racism and/or anti-oppression, and engage other key organizations and institutions to develop a strategy to address racial discrimination in the region of Peel.

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DISCUSSION

1. Background

In 1966, the United Nations General Assembly honoured the victims of the Sharpeville massacre by designating March 21st as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

It would be easy to rubber-stamp a symbolic proclamation in support of this cause and condemn extreme examples of violent racism. But racism exists in many forms. The sometimes unconscious and often unacknowledged prejudices that can carry on for many generations are still creating barriers for people of colour even in Peel. And Peel is not immune from violence driven by racism, which is especially tragic when it manifests among youth. More than half of Peel's population now belongs to what Census Canada calls a "visible minority." Efforts to address racial discrimination are essential for the future harmony of our community and an essential part of efforts to nurture mutual respect among all the dimension of diversity in our increasingly diverse region.

Community leaders and spokespersons in Peel are becoming more vocal about the need for municipal leadership to address the tough issues of discrimination and oppression. On April 16, 2009, Council heard from Sharon Floyd, Manager of Community Programs and Services, Interim Place, about the event organized in collaboration with the East Mississauga Community Health Centre, which brought some 200 members of the community to the South Common Community Centre to mark March 21, 2009. She asked Regional Council to commit to proclaiming the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on an annual basis starting on March 21, 2010, and called upon the Region of Peel to begin a process of community engagement to develop a comprehensive community plan to deal with the issues of racial discrimination. Councillors' comments were supportive of this initiative and in fact questioned why this proclamation had not been endorsed before.

In 2005, a dozen municipalities formed the Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination. Today the Coalition, endorsed by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, has grown to some 30 municipalities and includes Toronto, Montreal, Quebec, Halifax, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Oshawa, Vaughan and Windsor. These communities are actively engaged in ongoing community strategies to combat racism and discrimination. All have signed the Common Declaration to join the coalition, which is attached as Appendix II.

They are each committed to develop and implement their own unique Plan of Action in conjunction with other civic organizations, in support of a set of Common Commitments summarized below:

The municipality as a guardian of public interest

- *Increase vigilance against systemic and individual racism and discrimination.*
- *Monitor racism and discrimination in the community more broadly as well as municipal actions taken to address racism and discrimination.*
- *Inform and support individuals who experience racism and discrimination.*
- *Support policing services in their efforts to be exemplary institutions in combating racism and discrimination.*

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The municipality as an organization in the fulfillment of Human Right

- Provide equal opportunities as a municipal employer, service provider and contractor.
- Support measures to promote equity in the labour market.
- Support measures to challenge racism and discrimination and promote diversity and equal opportunity in housing.

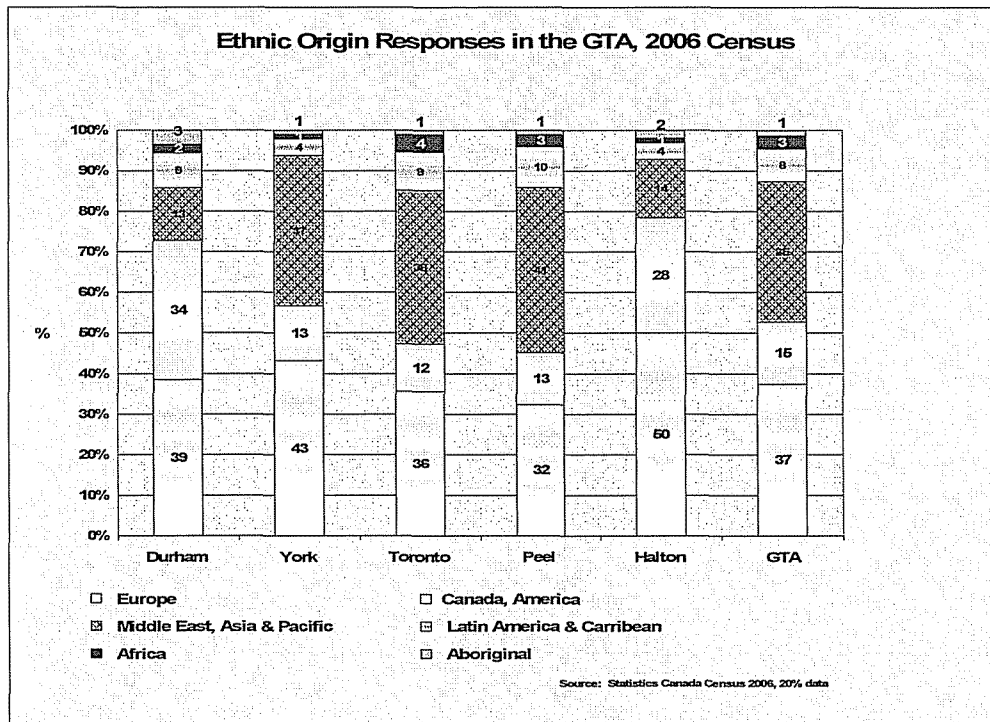
The municipality as a community sharing responsibility for respecting and promoting Human Rights and diversity

- Involve citizens by giving them a voice in anti-racism initiatives and decision-making.
- Support measures to challenge racism and discrimination and promote diversity and equal opportunity in the education sector and in other forms of learning.
- Promote respect, understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity and the inclusion of Aboriginal and racialized communities into the cultural fabric of the municipality.

Further details about the Coalition can be found at: <http://www.cmard.ca/>

2. Findings

Among large Canadian municipalities, Peel is quite distinct in the speed and magnitude of change in its ethnic makeup. Only Toronto has a higher proportion of immigrants, but Peel now exceeds even Toronto in its proportion of recent immigrants (arrived in Canada less than five years before) and visible minorities. This marks a rapid change in just a decade. Peel is now arguably the most ethnically diverse region in the GTA.



Note: Count of reported origins; a person may report more than one ethnic origin in the census.

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The “face” of Peel is changing:

<u>Net Change in “Visible Minority”</u>			
<u>Population in Peel 2001-2006</u>			
	2006	2001	Change
Total population	1,159,405	988,958	170,447
“Visible Minorities”	576,665	379,105	197,560
Not “Visible Minorities”	582,740	609,853	-27,113

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001, 2006

Ontario is not immune to the social issues that trouble diverse urban communities around the world, including racism. Racism came second only to poverty as a factor identified by Dr. Alvin Curling and Roy McMurtry in their report to the Province on the Roots of Youth Violence: “We were taken aback by the extent to which racism is alive and well and wreaking its deeply harmful effects on Ontarians and on the very fabric of this province.” As they put it, “it is apparent to us that all of the immediate risk factors for violence involving youth can easily arise from the diminished sense of worth that results from being subject to racism, and from the often accurate inference of what that racism means for the hopes of advancing, prospering and having a fair chance in our society.”

Our municipal and community partners have developed a wide range of progressive strategies to help welcome the growing numbers “minorities” in our midst, and counter the historic attitudes and habits that, intentionally or unintentionally, can lead to oppression. These include:

- Internal and external diversity programs in public and private sector institutions that address all diversities, including ethnicity, colour, differing ability, age, gender and sexual orientation.
- Campaigns aimed at gender equality and addressing violence against women. Regional staff are working to test a “gender lens” to apply to Regional processes and services, borrowing from a model in the City of Ottawa. This model is expanding to a multi-focal lens that addresses multiple dimensions of diversity.
- Efforts targeted at integrating immigrants socially, culturally, and economically.
- Specific strategies aimed at persons with disabilities, driven by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

Peel’s collaborative community immigration strategy is beginning to gain recognition across the country, and it has included in its plans is a public education component aimed at promoting inclusive social interaction.

Some of these initiatives, and their findings, are further detailed in Appendix III.

3. Proposed Direction

Staff met with community members who were supportive of the delegation on the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in 2009, and they have assisted in drafting a proclamation based on wording used in other communities, which is attached as Appendix I. Included in the meeting with Health and Human Services staff were representatives of Interim Place, the Social Planning Council of Peel, Peel Children’s Aid Society, Peel Committee Against Women Abuse, East Mississauga Community Health Centre, and the Sexual Assault Rape Crisis Centre of Peel.

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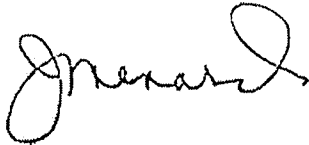
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Given the evidence that racial discrimination is a factor that can inhibit social inclusion and integration in both neighborhoods and workplaces in Peel, the time is right to recommend to Council that Peel:

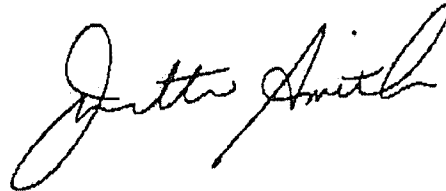
- endorse the proclamation of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination;
- learn from and potentially join with other municipalities in the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination;
- and join collaborative efforts in the community to combat racism and discrimination.

This will enhance and help to move forward the many efforts across Peel aimed at ensuring all diversities are respected and included in our society.

Staff propose to report back to Council within one year on the scope and direction of the community collaboration and the measures that will be used in future years to track progress.

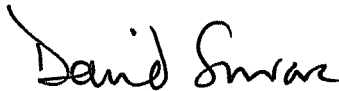


Janet Menard
Commissioner of Human Services



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Approved for Submission:



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c. Legislative Services

APPENDIX I

Proclamation

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN PEEL

March 21, 2010

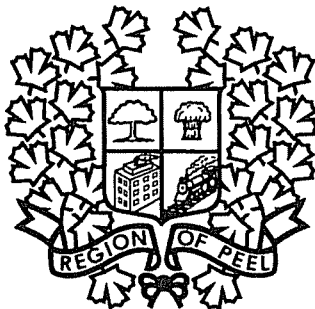
WHEREAS, in 1966 Canada supported the United Nations General Assembly resolution to honour the victims of the Sharpeville massacre by designating March 21 as International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination;

AND WHEREAS, Racism destroys the fabric of society, creating barriers to opportunities, prosperity, fairness and democracy, divides communities and erodes the human spirit;

AND WHEREAS, Racism combined with factors including but not limited to gender, differing ability, sexual orientation and place of origin compound the discrimination faced by individuals and communities who seek full and equitable participation in the region's political, social, economic and cultural life;

AND WHEREAS, it is everyone's duty to work towards the elimination of racism and discrimination to achieve a civil society where we all have the right to live in conditions of dignity, respect and peace;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that March 21, 2010, be proclaimed "INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION" in the Regional Municipality of Peel.



Emil Kolb
Regional Chair

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APPENDIX II

**Common Declaration of the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and
Discrimination**

Given that:

- 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 Discrimination and be part of UNESCO's international coalition launched in 2004; and
- The Federation of Canadian Municipalities endorses the Call for a Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination and encourages its members to join; and

Whereas:

- 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:

- The Municipality of _____ agrees to join the Coalition of Canadian Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination and, in joining the Coalition, endorses the Common Commitments and agrees to develop or adapt its own unique Plan of Action accordingly.
- These Common Commitments and the Municipality's unique Plan of Action will be an integral part of the Municipality's vision, strategies and policies.

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APPENDIX III

- In developing or adapting and implementing its own unique Plan of Action toward progressive realization of the Common Commitments, the Municipality will cooperate with other organizations and jurisdictions, including other levels of government, Aboriginal peoples, public and private sector institutions, and civil society organizations, all of whom have responsibilities in the area of human rights.
- 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 toward the realization of these Common Commitments.

(Date)

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Municipalities

Getting involved

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 community organizations and other stakeholders
- Send a letter from the mayor to the Canadian Commission for UNESCO expressing the municipality's interest in joining the Coalition
- Develop and promote the initiative within the municipality
- Take steps to have the municipal council pass a resolution to sign the Declaration of the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination, supporting the Common Commitments listed in this booklet and pledging to develop or reaffirm its own plan of action
- Evaluate activities already being undertaken by the municipality that correspond to one or more of the Common Commitment
- Identify new actions relating to one or more of the Common Commitments that the municipality will under take in the coming years
- Monitor, evaluate and report on progress made
- Encourage other municipal governments to join the Coalition

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Current Examples of Diversity Initiatives in Peel

Here are some examples of efforts currently in place within the Region and in the community, aimed at promoting acceptance of diversity.

a) Diversity strategy

Peel's internal corporate diversity strategy has been operating out of Human Resources for four years, focusing mainly on raising awareness among staff and bringing together those that truly celebrate diversity among both staff and clients. This program is being and given a higher profile in 2010, to actively review all Regional processes and services, to ensure mutual respect among staff, inclusive hiring and promotion, and truly inclusive services to clients.

b) Community tables

Peel staff participate in many collaborative tables that are addressing issues of diversity, mainly in the public and non-profit sectors. These include, for example:

- Black Community Action Network
- Community Health Centres
- Peel Committee Against Women Abuse / Peel Committee on Sexual Assault
- Regional Diversity Roundtable

c) Peel Newcomer Strategy Group

The Peel newcomer Strategy Group (PNSG) is a multi-sectoral table co-chaired by the Executive Director of the United Way of Peel and the Commissioner of Human Services that is aimed at ensuring a truly welcoming community response to the many newcomers to Canada who are arriving in Peel. Its goal is to "develop a coordinated and integrated settlement services model to ensure the successful settlement and integration of immigrants into all aspects of community life in the Region of Peel."

In planning the design of a coherent service system, extensive consultations were conducted by PNSG with service agencies and immigrants. Among their findings:

"Newcomers often felt discrimination was a real barrier to labour market participation and felt work should be done to increase the receptivity of the host community. Newcomers described circumstances in which they were denied work on the basis of their accent, ethnicity, religion, or cultural background. Some groups felt this very acutely and some newcomers expressed bitterness over the persistence of this situation."

d) Peel Immigration Project: Discussion Papers

To support the efforts of both the Region and its community partners to address the service needs of newcomers and their families, Peel was funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada to develop a series of discussion papers by recognized experts in the field, which are now available to the public on-line at:

<http://www.peelregion.ca/social-services/spec-inits.htm#immigrants>

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One of the three main themes arising from the discussion papers is this:

“Promote Social Inclusion: It is critical that the Region of Peel address structural factors that contribute to social exclusion, reduce political, social and economic integration and increase health risk. Infrastructure and policy level supports are needed to address the systemic barriers identified in these discussion papers and to ensure that diversity is reflected and respected in regional departments and community-wide institutions.”

e) Peel Immigration Web Portal

The Peel Immigration Web Portal, with funding from the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, was launched in November 2008 and was showcased to Council on October 29, 2009. The portal can be found at:

www.immigrationpeel.ca

Purpose of the portal is to help newcomers to:

- Make an informed decision when considering Peel Region as a site to settle in Canada.
- Prepare effectively before immigrating.
- Access services and supports available for newcomers when they arrive.

And thereby help ensure successful integration of those who do come into Peel's economy and community.

f) Peel Immigration Project: Labour Market Survey

The Peel Immigration Labour Market Survey was reviewed by General Committee on February 4, 2009. The full report is now posted at:

www.peelregion.ca/labourmarketsurvey

Discrimination is one of a complex of reasons identified in national research that can hold back skilled immigrants seeking to further their careers in Canada. These perceptions also show up in Peel through the Labour Market Survey:

- In general, individuals believed that immigrants face discrimination in Canadian workplaces. Immigrants, highly educated immigrants and the employed respondents were more likely to believe this was the case. Canadian experience is often taken to mean discrimination by immigrants as 60% of the immigrant respondents believe Canadians feel education obtained in non-westernized countries is inferior.
- In general, most reported that discrimination rarely happens to them, with no difference between public and private sector respondents. However, immigrant respondents, in particular, skilled worker principal applicants and Black and South Asian immigrant respondents are more likely to report discrimination happens to them often.

These perceptions are also supported by objective outcomes in the labour market, especially when examined by ethnicity. For example:

- Ethnic differences in income:

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Table 1: Average earned income by Ethnocultural Group (for those with Bachelor's degrees or higher)

	N	Average income
White	141	\$ 52,872.34
Black	32	\$ 48,125.00
Chinese	46	\$ 41,086.96
South Asian	96	\$ 39,062.50

- Ethnic differences in skill utilization:

Table 2: Skill Utilization by Ethnocultural Group (for those with Bachelor's degrees or higher)

I feel my job utilizes my full abilities	White	Chinese	South Asian	Black
No	33 22.4%	16 34.8%	38 35.5%	11 32.4%
Can't say	11 7.5%	11 23.9%	17 15.9%	3 8.8%
Yes	103 70.1%	19 41.3%	52 48.6%	20 58.8%
Total	147	46	107	34

n=334