
DATE: January 28, 2011

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

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

RECOMMENDATION

That March 21, 2011 be proclaimed “International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination” in the Regional Municipality of Peel;

And further, that the Region of Peel signs the Common Declaration and join the Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination (CMARD);

And further, that the Regional Diversity and Inclusion Strategy as described in the report of the Commissioners of Human Services and Health Services titled “International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in Peel”, be endorsed.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2010 the Region of Peel took a significant step towards promoting a more inclusive community and preventing racism and discrimination by declaring March 21 International Day Against Racism and Discrimination.
- Council also asked staff to review the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination, and consider endorsing its Common Declaration.
- Staff have conducted the review requested by Council and have continued to meet with community representatives, to bring back to Council an action plan to move forward on strategies to promote inclusion and reduce discrimination in all aspects of community life.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

On March 4, 2010, Council passed Resolution 2010-140:

That March 21, 2010 be proclaimed “International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination” in the Regional Municipality of Peel, as proposed in Appendix I of the report of the Commissioners of Human Services and Health Services, titled “International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in Peel”;

January 28, 2011

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN PEEL

And further, that staff be directed to review and make a recommendation to Council regarding joining the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism which includes endorsing the Common Declaration and developing a plan of action;

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

Staff has reviewed the Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination and is prepared to recommend joining in order to take advantage of the best practices followed by many municipalities who are promoting full social inclusion.

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 stakeholders working towards youth violence prevention in Peel.

Staff has continued to meet with community representatives who first brought the issue to Council in 2009, and are prepared to recommend the Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination action plan to move forward in Peel.

2. Findings

a) Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination

At its annual meeting in May 2010 the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) once again endorsed the Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination and encouraged municipal leaders to "invest in efforts and recommendations set forth by the Coalition."

The Coalition promotes best practices among municipalities that contribute to increased inclusiveness among their diverse populations. There is no membership fee, though there is consideration being given to setting a modest fee to support administration. There are preliminary discussions with FCM about housing the administration in their offices. In the meantime, the Coalition receives significant support from provincial Human Rights Commissions, including Ontario, and the Canadian Commission for the United Nations Education and Scientific Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

41 municipalities have so far joined the Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination. The membership is highly representative of diverse communities where racism and discrimination are a policy concern:

- Most major cities in Canada are members: Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Quebec, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon, Halifax and St. Johns - representing 22 percent of the population of Canada.
- The three largest cities in Canada contain the majority of the "visible minority" population in Canada. Just fewer than 96 per cent of visible minorities live in a census metropolitan area, compared to 68.1 per cent of Canada's overall population.
- Most are concentrated in the Greater Toronto Area, Vancouver and Montreal.
- Cities in Ontario who are members include Toronto, Windsor, Vaughan, Markham, Oakville, Oshawa, Kingston, Sudbury and Thunder Bay - representing a significant proportion of the Ontario population.

January 28, 2011

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN PEEL

b) Peel Strategies and Community Initiatives - Current Status

The Region of Peel has participated in a number of partnerships and initiatives that promote inclusion and address discrimination. These include:

- Peel Newcomer Strategy Group;
- The Region of Peel's immigration projects, which include the Peel Immigration Discussion Papers, the Peel Immigration Labour Market Survey, and the Peel Immigration Portal;
- Community tables which include the Regional Diversity Roundtable; the Peel Committee Against Women Abuse / Peel Committee on Sexual Assault; and the Black Community Action Network; and
- Peel's Corporate Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.
<http://www.peelregion.ca/corpserv/diversity10/>

3. Proposed Direction

In 2011, staff are proposing to seek Council's endorsement on the corporate inclusion strategy to ensure inclusive regional services and corporate practices. A significant area of focus within this framework is to engage further with the community to promote a fully inclusive Peel Region.

To support these strategies, staff are recommending that the Region of Peel join the Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination, and create an action plan encompassing the following:

a) Regional Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

The Diversity and Inclusion Strategy approved by Executive Management Team in November 2010 proposes to:

- Demonstrate the value and benefits of diversity;
- Strengthen leadership capacity and workforce competencies to achieve greater diversity and inclusion;
- Build a diverse regional workforce; and
- Influence the delivery of programs and services to meet the needs of the Region of Peel's diverse communities of interest.

The Diversity and Inclusion Strategy includes supporting actions and outcomes, and a high level implementation plan, to ensure a fully inclusive staff, policies and organization culture for all services delivered by Peel employees.

To further support the direction of the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, staff recommend the formation of a community strategic committee that includes representation from Council, senior regional staff, and community representatives. Other public bodies in Peel Region may also be invited to participate in setting goals and objectives and defining measurable outcomes to promote inclusion and address all forms of discrimination.

Regional staff will then work with community representatives in Peel to adopt best practices from other communities who are members of the Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination, guided by the "Anti-Racism and Discrimination for Municipalities" manual from the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC), to define

January 28, 2011

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN PEEL

the draft terms of reference for the collaborative community table and invite public sector organizations to become involved.

The collaborative community table will then finalize and approve the terms of reference, which will include:

- Developing a vision for a fully inclusive community.
- Developing a strategy that builds on best practices of inclusion, promotes diversity (the business case), and also addresses roots of racism and discrimination in all its forms.
- Reviewing human rights policies, inclusionary strategies and diversity programs of like minded public bodies.
- Setting community wide goals for improved inclusiveness.
- Monitoring to measure progress toward these goals.
- Forum to hear complaints arising from discriminatory incidents and practices.

Further to joining the Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination, staff recommends that we consider placing signage on the Region's facility entrances and stationary materials stating that the Region of Peel is a member of the Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination.

b) Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Discrimination

The main benefit of joining Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination is the opportunity to share best practices with other municipalities, other levels of government, the private sector and civil society organizations, whom have responsibilities in the area of human rights. Joining the Coalition will help the Region of Peel to advance work already done in the Region while publicly showing its commitment to addressing issues of racism and discrimination in the community.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The Region of Peel's newly developed Inclusion and Diversity Strategy aligns well with the plan of action under the Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination and would involve working cooperatively with our community partners.

IMPLICATIONS FOR OTHER AREA MUNICIPALITIES

The Region of Peel membership in Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination will not preclude the municipalities of Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga from joining Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination and developing their own individual action plans to address issues of racism and discrimination.

January 28, 2011

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN PEEL

CONCLUSION

The Region of Peel membership in the Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination will demonstrate its local and international commitment to the process of eliminating racism and discrimination. This will help the Region of Peel to further collaborate with other municipalities to develop initiatives to address racism and discrimination, and establish a framework of partnership and cooperation on the issue.

The Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination framework combined with other current initiatives will result in a more welcoming and enabling environment for the successful integration of the Region's residents, many of whom are immigrants. This will improve the long term competitiveness of the Region and the quality of life of the Region's residents.

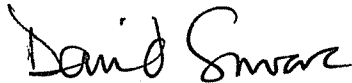


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Approved for Submission:



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c. Legislative Services

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN PEEL

APPENDIX I

Proclamation

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN PEEL

March 21, 2011

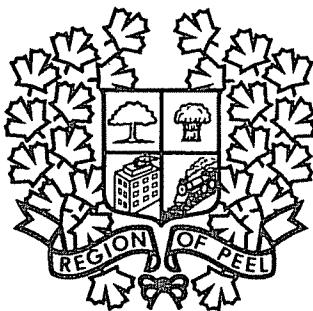
WHEREAS, in 1966, Canada supported the United Nations General Assembly resolution to honour the victims of the Sharpeville massacre by designating March 21 as International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination;

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, 2011, be proclaimed "INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION" in the Regional Municipality of Peel.



Emil Kolb
Regional Chair

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN PEEL

APPENDIX II

Common Commitments of the Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination

The Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination developed ten guiding commitments in three general areas:

The municipality as a guardian of the public interest:

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

The municipality as an organization in the fulfillment of human rights:

- 5) Provide equal opportunities as a municipal employer, service provider and contractor.
- 6) Support measures to promote equity in the labour market.
- 7) 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:

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

Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination The City of Edmonton Action Plan addresses all ten of these commitments. While the City of Edmonton strives to be an inclusive, safe, and vibrant community, it faces some direct challenges in the area of race relations.