

OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2019**Working Session 13 – Statement by the Delegation of Canada, delivered by Counsellor Daniel Barbarie, Tuesday, September 24, 2019**

Moderator,

Our government is deeply concerned about the rise of xenophobia, hatred and discrimination witnessed around the world. Consistent and targeted violent attacks demonstrate that no country or community is immune.

In June of this year the government introduced Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2019-2022. The strategy is guided by a vision of Canada where all Canadians benefit from equitable access to, and participation in, the economic, cultural, social, and political spheres. The strategy will invest \$45M to fight systemic discrimination through community programs, public education campaigns, and combatting online hate.

As a multicultural, multi-faith and multi-ethnic society with linguistic duality and long history of immigration and integration, Canada is committed to championing pluralism, respect for diversity and inclusion internationally and at home.

At home, Canada recognizes the historical roots of racism and its different impacts on Indigenous peoples, as well as racialized and religious minority communities. Canada is working with Indigenous peoples to build a relationship based on respect, partnership and recognition of rights.

For example, Canada welcomed the final report from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and committed to engaging with Indigenous governments, families and survivors, Indigenous women's organizations, as well as provinces and territories in developing a national action plan to respond to the report. Canada is also reviewing the report's recommendations to inform further actions to prevent and eliminate violence against Indigenous women and girls, and to advance Canada's commitment to all Indigenous peoples and communities.

On the issue of anti-Muslim discrimination and hatred, we believe that the misconceptions surrounding the fight against anti-Muslim discrimination needs to be challenged. Following the horrific terror attack in New Zealand last March, Canada joined the Christchurch Call to Action, a global pledge to eliminate terrorist and

violent extremism content online. The anti-racism strategy also includes a working definition of Islamophobia¹, as we believe that words matter when it comes to promoting inclusion and eliminating discrimination. By having such definitions, it allows us to have a common understanding of a word or subject.

Antisemitism persists as one of the greatest sources of discrimination and intolerance in the OSCE region, including in Canada, but we are committed to fighting it. We welcomed the report of Rabbi Andrew Baker, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combatting Anti-Semitism, following his visit to Canada in October 2018. We are taking steps to implement a number of his recommendations, including the specific categorization of antisemitism in the national anti-racism strategy, and the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition² of antisemitism as part of the anti-racism strategy. As a proud member of the International Holocaust Alliance, Canada strongly supported the development of IHRA's working definition of antisemitism, opening up new opportunities in the fight against antisemitism.

A critical component of Canada's anti-racism strategy is its recognition that anti-Black racism is particularly manifested in the legacy of the ongoing social, economic, and political marginalization of African Canadians in society. In addressing this problem, Canada officially recognized the UN International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024) and has committed \$44M over five years to counter such racism in Canada.

Canada advocates strongly in support of the rights of LGBTI persons, both at home and abroad. No one should be subjected to discrimination or violence because of their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or due to their sex characteristics. We encourage all states to support the work of local LGBTI organizations, in order to further promote the welfare of LGBTI communities.

In conclusion, Canada offers the following four recommendations for this session:

- 1) That the Chairperson-in-Office table a draft Ministerial Council Decision on the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition on antisemitism by the OSCE.

¹ Islamophobia: Includes racism, stereotypes, prejudice, fear or acts of hostility directed towards individual Muslims or followers of Islam in general. In addition to individual acts of intolerance and racial profiling, Islamophobia can lead to viewing and treating Muslims as a greater security threat on an institutional, systemic, and societal level.

² Antisemitism: Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, towards Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

- 2) That OSCE participating States consciously and proactively foster inclusive approaches, and go beyond reactively responding to hate and discrimination.
- 3) For ODIHR to continue their steady work to uproot racism, discrimination and exclusion of all kinds, through innovative, holistic, and preventative approaches that advance inclusion and respect for diversity.
- 4) Recalling our Madrid 2007 commitment to combat all forms of discrimination, that all participating States eliminate laws and policies that discriminate against persons based on their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics, and to prevent acts of violence targeting LGBTI persons.

Thank you.