

BULLETIN

## Statement from Canada's unions on anti-Black racism

June 3, 2020

Amid the horrific scenes coming out of the United States of continued police brutality against protesters in the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd, Canada's unions are expressing solidarity with Black communities everywhere, including in our own backyard.

The fight against anti-Black racism and police brutality is based in the long, despicable history of slavery, oppression and colonization of Indigenous communities and Black people in North America. The impact of which continues to be felt today.

There is no reason that Black people in Canada should die at the hands of our police services. Yet the deaths of Black Canadians, Abdirahman Abdi, Bony Jean-Pierre, D'Andre Campbell and most recently under investigation, Regis Korchinski-Paquet, demonstrate that anti-Black racism continues to be a leading cause for the loss of Black lives.

"Anti-Black racism is a destructive force in our society afflicting families and communities," said Hassan Yussuff, Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) president. "Canada's unions are committed to fighting all forms of discrimination and are urgently calling for accountability and systemic change."

It's important to highlight the severe lack of mental health supports, the lack of access to prescription medication and poor working conditions facing many workers who are often Black and racialized. Research clearly shows that Black communities have diminished health outcomes compared to the broader population as a result of historic neglect on the part of our system. This is playing out in this current pandemic, with early indications of a disproportionate impact on Black, Indigenous and other racialized communities.

"It's time to hold some very uncomfortable conversations and reflect on the policy decisions and choices that have led us here," continued Yussuff. "The whole country is looking to our government for leadership and immediate action that will lead to real and meaningful changes in the way Black communities are treated."

The CLC is committed to raising awareness on the role of Canada's labour movement to combat anti-Black racism, including providing educational opportunities to union members, as well as to the broader public, and publicly advocating for accountability and systemic change at the policy level.

For further reading related to anti-Black racism in Canada:

*Policing Black Lives* by Robyn Maynard

*White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo

*The Skin We're In* by Desmond Cole

*BlackLife: Post-BLM and the Struggle for Freedom* by Rinaldo Walcott and Idil Abdillahi

*There's Something In The Water* by Ingrid R. G. Waldron

*Until We Are Free: Reflections on Black Lives Matter in Canada* edited by Rodney Diverlus, Sandy Hudson, and Syrus Marcus Ware

Find more resources [here](#).

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