

Panel 3 – Canadian Statement on Culture & Recognition

Madame Chair,

Canadians of African Descent have made countless incredible contributions that have made Canada the country we know and love today. Contributions that have enriched every aspect of Canadian society.

But, we know that we **cannot** build a truly inclusive and equitable world for people of African descent without first recognizing and celebrating their distinct culture and heritage.

Since endorsing the Decade in 2018, Canada has recognized more than 40 people, places, and events of national historic significance that reflect the important contributions of Black communities to Canada's shared heritage. This includes designations of locations such as Africville, a historic Black community in the province of Nova Scotia, and recognition of people such as Black Loyalist Richard Pierpoint and anti-slavery activist Mary Ann Shadd.

And we have put in place programs like the Community Support for Black Canadian Youth Initiative and the Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Program to combat discrimination and foster the promotion of Black history, culture, and identity.

However, our government knows that as we move forward, we must continue to be deliberate and persistent in this recognition. I always say that in Canada diversity is a fact, but inclusion is a choice. And when we make that choice, the choice to be inclusive, the choice to recognize and celebrate the culture of people of African descent Canada wins, Canadians win and the world wins.

Because we fundamentally believe that we are always stronger together.

Merci/Thank you.