ONTARIO FEDERATION OF LABOUR

LAURA WALTON, President

AHMAD GAIED, Secretary-Treasurer

MICHAEL HAMILTON, Executive Vice-President

November 2, 2026

TO: COALITION OF BLACK TRADE UNIONISTS (CBTU) CANADA

RE: OFL ENDORSEMENT OF CBTU CANADA'S CAMPAIGN FOR A FEDERAL APOLOGY FOR CANADA'S ROLE IN THE TRAFFICKING AND ENSLAVEMENT OF AFRICANS

Greetings,

The Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL), representing 54 unions and more than one million workers across Ontario, is proud to endorse and support the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) Canada's call on the Government of Canada to issue a formal apology for its role in the trafficking and enslavement of Africans.

The labour movement's commitment to equity, human rights, and economic justice requires us to confront historical injustices and the ongoing impacts. The trafficking and enslavement of African peoples was a system of violence, dispossession and economic exploitation that generated wealth through the forced labour and stolen lives of generations of Africans and their descendants. Its legacy did not end with abolition and lives on in systemic anti-Black racism, economic inequality, and workplace discrimination that Black workers and communities still face, highlighting the ongoing need for action to advance racial and economic justice.

As trade unionists, we know that the fight for workers' rights is inseparable from the fight for racial justice. Building fair and inclusive workplaces requires acknowledging the histories and structures that have contributed to persistent inequities and exclusion.

This call for a formal apology is especially appropriate as the United Nations has proclaimed the Second International Decade for People of African Descent (2025-2034), with a focus on recognition, justice, and development. Canada's acknowledgment of its role in the trafficking and enslavement of Africans would be an important act of accountability and a meaningful step toward advancing those principles.

The OFL unites in solidarity with CBTU Canada and all those advancing this call for truth, accountability, and justice. We encourage labour organizations, community groups, and allies across the country to lend their support to this important campaign and to continue challenging anti-Black racism in all its forms.

We commend CBTU Canada for its leadership in advancing this important national conversation and in ensuring that the voices and experiences of Black workers and communities remain at the forefront of efforts to achieve justice and accountability.

In solidarity,

LAURA WALTON
President

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Secretary-Treasurer

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