JOINT STATEMENT

INVEST IN THE BLACK JUSTICE STRATEGY

JOINT STATEMENT WELCOMING THE FEDERAL INVESTMENT IN THE CANADIAN BLACK JUSTICE STRATEGY

OTTAWA, ON, November 5, 2026: The African Nova Scotian Justice Institute, the Black Opportunity Fund, the Foundation for Black Communities and the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) welcome the Government of Canada's multi-year investment of $136.3M in Canada's Black Justice Strategy, announced today in Budget 2026.

We thank the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Justice and Attorney General and the Minister of Public Safety for this continued commitment. We also thank the Members of Parliament and Senators who met with us, and the more than 1,000 organizations and individuals across Canada who signed on to call for this multi-year investment. Today's announcement shows that the government listened to communities.

Black Canadians are overrepresented at every stage of the criminal justice system, from police stops to federal custody. The Black Justice Strategy is the federal government's plan to address that, and community organizations are the ones doing much of that work: running youth diversion programs, supporting victims, helping people return home after incarceration and keeping young people out of the system in the first place.

Multi-year funding makes a real difference to that work. It means organizations can keep experienced staff instead of losing them at the end of each fiscal year. It means programs can be planned over several years, and that the people who rely on them can count on them being there. It also means the results of this work can be properly measured over time.

> "For African Nova Scotians, the difference between incarceration and opportunity can come down to whether the right support is there at the right time. ANSJI is there before incarceration, through the justice system, and when people return home. This multi-year funding gives us the stability to strengthen that work and build into our generations to come," said Folami Jones, Interim Executive Director of the African Nova Scotian Justice Institute.

> "The Black Opportunity Fund thanks the Prime Minister and the Government of Canada for this multi-year investment. Prevention costs far less than incarceration, so every young person kept out of the justice system means a safer community and lower costs for government. The organizations doing this work know their communities best, and stable funding lets them hire, plan and deliver results over time. Our focus now is making sure the money reaches groups on the ground quickly, so there is no gap when current funding ends in April," said Craig Wellington, CEO of the Black Opportunity Fund.

> "This is one of the largest investments towards addressing systemic racism in the justice system. The programs that will be funded, the policies that will be changed will have generational impacts on improving the lives of Black Canadians," said Mohammed Hashim, CEO and Executive Director of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation.

> “Investing in Canada’s Black Justice Strategy is a step toward systemic fairness. It’s an investment in a more inclusive, resilient, and prosperous Canada for everyone,” said Ikem Opara, CEO of the Foundation for Black Communities.

> “Black women, girls, trans and non-binary people are affected at every stage of the justice system: as people who are charged, as survivors of violence and as mothers and parents holding families together. LEAF thanks the Government of Canada for this investment, which will fund community programs built around their needs,” said Ruth Goba, Executive Director, Women’s Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF).

We look forward to working with the federal government on implementation, with a focus on making sure community organizations can continue delivering their services without interruption.

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