

**HALIFAX**

**Official Recognition and Proclamation of  
the United Nations International Decade for  
People of African Descent 2015-2024**

July 21, 2020

# Origin

On July 7, 2020, following a presentation by Senator Dr. Wanda Thomas Bernard regarding anti-Black racism in the HRM, the CAO requested a resolution for Halifax Regional Council to sign on to the International Decade for People of African Descent.

# Discussion

In December 2013, the UN adopted a resolution to proclaim the **“International Decade for People of African Descent (the Decade), commencing on 1 January 2015 and ending on 31 December 2024, with the theme “People of African descent: recognition, justice and development”**.



# Objectives of the Decade Framework

- Promote respect, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by people of African descent, as recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- Promote a greater knowledge of and respect for the diverse heritage, culture and contribution of people of African descent to the development of societies;
- Adopt and strengthen national, regional and international legal frameworks according to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and to ensure their full and effective implementation.

# Three Pillars of the Decade

- **Recognition**: Through this pillar, we recognize, celebrate and affirm the full history and contributions of people of African descent. In so doing, we make the history of African Nova Scotians a shared history, and African Nova Scotian issues, our collective issues that cannot be ignored.
- **Justice**: This pillar provides an opportunity to learn from the past to advance social justice and inclusion policies, eradicate racism and intolerance, and promote human rights.
- **Development**: This pillar challenges us to commit to the overall well-being and prosperity of the community.

# Proclamation of the Decade

Several Canadian jurisdictions and organizations have officially proclaimed and adopted the Decade, including:

- The Federal Government – January 2018
- Province of Nova Scotia – May 2018
- City of Toronto – April 2019
- City of Ottawa – March 2018
- Dalhousie University – October 2018

# Recommendations

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council:

1. authorize the Mayor, on Regional Council's behalf, to proclaim the years 2015-2024 as the International Decade for People of African Descent and sign the proclamation set out in Attachment 1 to this report; and,
2. direct the CAO to develop an anti-Black racism action plan in support of the Proclamation and return to Regional Council for its endorsement.



## In closing...

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Our recognition of the Decade is part of our overall ongoing work to acknowledge and address Anti-Black Racism in the municipality.

