

Statement on behalf of the Cultural Communities Advisory Committee

At its meeting on August 25, 2017, the Cultural Communities Advisory Committee approved the following motion.

The following statement represents the views of the City of Vancouver's Cultural Communities Advisory Committee.

The Cultural Communities Advisory Committee (the "CCAC") represents Vancouver's diverse cultural communities and advises City Council on issues of inclusion and participation of said communities in City services and civic life. The CCAC is grateful to the Coast Salish peoples, specifically the Squamish, Musqueam, and Tsleil Waututh Nations for sharing the unceded lands on which our communities are able to live and work today.

The members of the CCAC wish to stand united in condemning, to the fullest extent, the anti-immigrant, anti-Semitic, and Islamophobic protests, violence, and vitriol that we have experienced this past month first in Charlottesville, Virginia and as well as in our own city, Vancouver. The CCAC is a firm believer that building a peaceful and respectful dialogue around truth, compassion and understanding needs to be the priority action for our City and its residents. This should constitute as the starting point of a longer process that seeks to combat the divisive forces of hate and prejudice.

Members of the CCAC joined over 4,000 residents of Vancouver who came out on August 19, 2017, in a peaceful display of support for our diverse cultural communities. We recognize that many Vancouver residents, particularly those of diverse cultural communities, have expressed their fear of attending and of actively participating due to concerns over safety and security. The CCAC acknowledges this as an issue which requires our immediate attention and one that will motivate our upcoming positive community-building efforts.

Along these lines, the CCAC wishes to take this opportunity to announce a new campaign titled, "Voices of Vancouver". This educational, youth-led campaign seeks to empower communities through capacity-building and foster diversity and inclusion. We will do this through intercultural exchanges, knowledge sharing, and through the facilitation of accessible dialogue that will give breath to the voices of Vancouver's cultural communities.

Today, we call to action all Vancouverites to assist us in these ongoing and forward-looking efforts to combat racism, Islamophobia, anti-immigrant sentiment and other forms of discrimination and exclusion.

Details relating to this campaign and related events will be released in early fall. Individuals who wish to get involved in this project should contact our committee email address at CCAC@vancouver.ca.

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