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CHINESE CANADIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE CCNC-SJ

Canada Is Moving Towards Major Changes in Our Workplace Equity Laws

Chinese Canadian National Council for Social Justice (CCNC-SJ) welcomes the federal government's support to listing Black and LGBTQ people among groups facing systemic workplace barriers under the Employment Equity Act. CCNC-SJ also urges the federal government to modernize the Employment Equity Act as recommended by the Employment Equity Act Review Task Force.

The stated purpose of the 1986 Employment Equity Act is to knock down employment barriers marginalized communities face. It identifies four groups that face additional barriers in the workplace: women, Indigenous peoples, people with disabilities and members of visible minorities. According to the report issued by the Task Force, it is "startling to see how unrepresentative some employment remains across Canada". One of the recommendations is that Black workers should comprise a separate group under the Employment Equity Act, instead of falling under the outdated label of "visible minority".

In the presentation to the Employment Equity Act Review Task Force, CCNC-SJ recommended the inclusion of 2SLGBTQ+ communities as one of the designated groups. As well, CCNC-SJ also highlighted the importance of working with racialized communities to collect disaggregation of racial and other identity employment data so that the representation of Asian and other communities in workplaces can be adequately captured.

"It is really encouraging to see that the Minister of Labour has expressed broad support for the report from the task force that has incorporated many recommendations made by CCNC-SJ and our allies. We urge the Minister to take the long overdue actions to ensure that Black, Asian, and other racialized communities, especially those that experience additional barriers due to their gender, sexual orientation, or disabilities, have a fair chance of getting hired, promoted, and developed in the federal civil service and other regulated workplaces," said Amy Go, President, CCNC-SJ.

"CCNC-SJ is pleased to see that for the first time in decades, the government is backing the legislative change to improve employment equity. Much more can be done in this area to ensure that no one is denied employment opportunities for reasons related to individual or systemic discrimination instead of ability. Respecting differences and recognizing the value of diverse lived experiences are important tools to promote fairness, equity, diversity and inclusion in all workplaces," said Agnes Man, Executive Director, CCNC-SJ.

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