



La très honorable • The Right Honourable

MICHAËLLE JEAN C.P., C.C., C.M.M., C.O.M., C.D.

27^e Gouverneure générale et Commandante en chef du Canada • 27th Governor General and Commander in Chief of Canada (2005-2010)

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STATEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL DAY OF HUMAN FRATERNITY

IQALUIT, Nunavut — This February 4th, proclaimed International Day of Human Fraternity by the United Nations, happens to be the day my husband Jean-Daniel Lafond and I are expected in Iqaluit, the capital of Nunavut, at the invitation of the Nunavut Black History Society.

Did you know that, for the past 10 years, Black History Month has been celebrated within the beating heart of the Inuit world?

With an exciting program over several days, we are invited to give special meaning to human fraternity by affirming our shared human condition, with the desire to meet and enter dialogue, and above all to act in solidarity and move forward together.

Each time we return to Nunavut—one of the four regions of the vast and splendid Inuit Nunangat territory, as it is named by its inhabitants and where we have had the immense good fortune to travel—is a moment of great emotion.

Inuit communities are most welcoming, always eager to convey the meaning of their age-old presence on these grounds, their realities, the considerable challenges they aim to overcome, their hopes and demands that their ancestral rights be recognized and respected, with full reciprocity, and to share their own perspectives on development.

The term Inuit Nunangat includes the land, water and ice of this vast expanse of which, better than anyone, the Inuit perceive the lights and horizons, its delicate equilibrium, its riches and perils. This territory has always been an integral part of Inuit culture and way of life.

Among those who came from elsewhere to live here, the Black community in Nunavut is one that honours the aspirations of the people of the Arctic and work every day to further the Inuit dream.

This meeting of minds and souls, this real-life encounter will be celebrated with the heart, in a spirit of genuine human fraternity. Because Black communities, like Inuit communities call for recognition, justice, fairness, equality. Black communities, like Inuit communities say that the development of this country must fully account for our contribution, our existence, our involvement, past and present, and our achievements.



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We Blacks and Inuit demand recognition and justice.

We Blacks and Inuit are engaged in the same struggle against systemic exclusion, discrimination, and poverty.

We Blacks and Inuit share the same motivation to stand in solidarity until we see human fraternity triumph.

Such is also the vision that the Michaëlle Jean Foundation promotes through its actions and initiatives: to break down solitudes, to create connections, to build bridges and synergies on a human scale, to help prevent also the devastating consequences of various forms of exclusion that afflict millions of young people from the most systematically and historically marginalized communities in Canada.

On International Day of Human Fraternity, let us mobilize broadly with our youth, our elders, everyone. Let's get together. Because together, we are stronger.

— Michaëlle Jean