

March 21st

CBTU Statement on the International Day for the Elimination of Racism

The International Day for the Elimination of Racism is a call to action at a time of intensified anti-black racism, Islamophobia and Xenophobia.

On, February 27th, over fifty Labour and community activists responded to this call to action. During the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Ontario (CBTU) African Heritage Month event, *“Empowering Our Community, Politicizing our Struggles,”* community based discussions linked the anti-racist struggles of yesterday to the realities of today. Activists spoke out against racism within the Criminal Justice System, Anti-Black Racism and the underrepresentation of racialized peoples in Leadership positions within politics and Union positions. (See the Event Report link for full details)

CBTU intends to put the demands for Criminal Justice reform into action through ongoing delivery of our Mass Incarceration Workshop titled: “I Can’t Work if I Can’t Breathe”, with the objective of engaging the labour movement in the struggle to end extra-judicial killings and mass incarceration of Black and Indigenous peoples.

CBTU is also working in partnership with the Ontario Federation of Labour and Canadian Labour Congress to ensure that our voices are heard at the level of public policy. As a result of the groundbreaking work of Black Lives Matter – Toronto, supported by CBTU and the community, Mayor John Tory and Premier Kathleen Wynne have developed strategic plans to combat racism. (<http://www.torontoforall.ca>; <https://www.ontario.ca/page/better-way-forward-ontarios-3-year-anti-racism-strategic-plan>) But, CBTU believes as Frederick Douglass said: “Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.” That is why CBTU will continue to pressure governments at all levels to deliver on their promises. #BlackVotesMatter

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