



National Association of Women and the  
Law  
Association nationale Femmes et Droit

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August 20, 2020

Honourable Justin Trudeau  
Prime Minister of Canada  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A2

Honourable David Lametti  
Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada  
284 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H8

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau and Justice Minister Lametti:

**Re: Upcoming Ontario vacancies – Supreme Court of Canada**

We write to you as organizations that advocate for the rights and interests of Indigenous people and Black, racialized, women's, disability, low income and other equality seeking groups in Canada.

We are aware that two Ontario vacancies at the Supreme Court of Canada will need to be filled in the next 18 months: Justice Abella retires July 1, 2021 and Justice Moldaver retires December 23, 2022. Given that our highest court remains all white, and in view of the many pressing legal issues implicating the rights of Indigenous people and Black, racialized and other marginalized groups within Canadian society, it is time to fill both positions with members who are representative of these communities.

The Supreme Court requires not only in-depth knowledge of Indigenous and substantive equality law, but judges with expertise grounded in lived experience, and the legitimacy that comes with a bench that is more representative of the diversity of our country. As Chief Justice Wagner recently expressed it: "There is a growing awareness of the need for our courts, including our highest court, to reflect the diversity of Canadians."

Over the next months, the signatories to this letter will be sending you the names of highly qualified candidates for the upcoming Ontario vacancies. As you will see, there is no shortage of brilliant and experienced lawyers, both women and men, who are Indigenous or from Black, racialized and other equality seeking communities, who can serve our country with distinction on its highest court. In these circumstances, the appointment of a person who is not a member of these communities would bear a very heavy burden of justification. We urge you to reach out to the highly qualified candidates we recommend for the upcoming Supreme Court vacancies and for any judicial appointments you may make in future.

Yours sincerely,



Suki Beavers, Executive Director  
National Association of Women and the Law/Association nationale Femmes et Droit

On behalf of:

Lori Anne Thomas, President  
Canadian Association of Black Lawyers

Debbie Douglas, Executive Director  
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants

Janet Dench, Executive Director  
Canadian Council for Refugees

Ruth Goba, Executive Director  
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Lise Martin, Executive Director  
Women's Shelters Canada

Amy Go, President  
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Bonnie Brayton, National Executive Director  
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Michael Kerr, Coordinator  
Colour of Poverty – Colour of Change

Maya Roy, CEO  
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Diana Majury, Executive Director  
Feminist Alliance for International Action

Leilani Farha, Executive Director  
Canada Without Poverty

Krista Carr, Executive Vice President  
Canadian Association for Community Living

Aarondeep Bains, President  
South Asian Bar Association – Toronto Chapter

Marlene Ham, Executive Director  
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Avvy Go, Clinic Director  
Chinese & Southeast Asian Legal Clinic Toronto

Deepa Mattoo, Executive Director  
Barbara Schlifer Commemorative Clinic

Kenn Hale, Director of Advocacy and Legal Services  
Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario

Pamela Cross, Legal Director  
Luke's Place Support and Resource Centre

Bonnie Morton, President  
Charter Committee on Poverty Issues

Cheryl Milne, Executive Director  
David Asper Centre for Constitutional Rights

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Amy Scholten, Executive Director  
Renfrew County Legal Clinic

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Walter Van de Kleut, Executive Director  
Chatham-Kent Legal Clinic

Hugh Tye, Executive Director  
Hamilton Community Legal Clinic

Omar Ha-Redeye, Executive Director  
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Lisa Cirillo, Executive Director  
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c.c.

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Supreme Court of Canada

