



June 14, 2022

Nicolas Slobinsky  
Senior Director, Pacific Region  
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950 West 41st Avenue, Suite 300  
Vancouver, BC V5Z 2N7  
Sent via email: [nslobinsky@cija.ca](mailto:nslobinsky@cija.ca)

Dear Nicolas Slobinsky:

I am writing to you in response to a number of inquiries received by our government regarding the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) definition of antisemitism.

In its 2019 publication, "Building a Foundation for Change: Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy 2019-2022",<sup>1</sup> the Government of Canada included definitions of many terms, including Anti-Asian Racism, Anti-Black Racism, Antisemitism, Islamophobia and Racism. The Province of British Columbia fully supports the Federal Government's adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism and rejects all forms of discrimination as outlined in Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy.

In 2021, Parliamentary Secretary Rachna Singh, who leads the Province's Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism work, held meetings with members of the Jewish community to understand their lived experience and the discrimination they continue to face. Including the definition of antisemitism was considered in developing the *Anti-Racism Data Act*, which came into force on June 2, 2022. While the term is not specifically referenced in the legislation, the potential harms to individual communities were taken into consideration. Section 12 (2) of the *Anti-Racism Data Act* permits the Director of Statistics to issue data directives in relation to the intersectional analysis of information.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/anti-racism-engagement/anti-racism-strategy.html>, accessed May 24, 2022

Our government understands that systemic racism looks different for different communities and that it can change over time. Therefore, there are many terms in the legislation that have not been specifically defined. Their meaning is intended to be taken within the context of everyday life in British Columbia. We also understand that to effectively combat one of the world's oldest forms of hatred, we must first clearly identify it. In this light, we see the IHRA definition as an important non-legally binding educational tool to help us determine what is and what is not antisemitic, which allows us to work toward a society that is better for all British Columbians.

Once the data is collected, we will be engaging and consulting with the Jewish community about our findings and collaborating with you to develop solutions to address any identified rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism within government programs, policies and services. We will also be determining the application to public bodies, including those entities prioritized by First Nations, Indigenous Peoples, Racialized Peoples and the Jewish community in British Columbia.

The Province of British Columbia is committed to dismantling systemic racism. The *Anti-Racism Data Act* was co-developed with Indigenous partners and incorporated feedback from over 13,000 British Columbians, including those with lived experience of racism and inequity. The approach established in the *Anti-Racism Data Act* will ensure we are collecting, analyzing and sharing information in ways that are culturally safe and prevent and minimize harm to communities, such as further stereotyping or stigmatization.

Today and every day, our government stands with British Columbia's Jewish community in the fight against antisemitism as we always have and always will.

I appreciate your taking the time to write to me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John J. Horgan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Horgan  
Premier