

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

We call upon all levels of government to provide answers & solutions to ongoing African Migrant tragedies

MISSISSAUGA, ON – February 23, 2024 – The African Canadian community, alongside refugee serving organizations, faith groups, frontline service workers, health organizations, and other civil society groups, are once again grappling with grief and frustration as yet another tragic loss has occurred within our community.

On Sunday, February 18, 2024, another precious life, that of an African migrant, a woman from Kenya, was lost at the Dundas Shelter in Mississauga. This devastating event comes exactly three months after the heartbreaking death of a Nigerian migrant [man] who passed away while sleeping in a tent outside in the freezing cold on November 16th.

- The deceased, Ms. Delphina Ngigi was a refugee claimant and widow with 4 children, who are back home in Kenya
- She came to Canada seeking refuge on Thursday, February 15th, 2024 and went to Dundas Shelter on Saturday, February 17th, 2024 at 1pm, she was not admitted into the Dundas shelter until 8pm on February 17th, 2024. She spent many hours in the cold at temperatures between minus 4 and minus 6 degrees.
- Around 5pm on February 18th 2024, a member from the African community received a call from a social worker at the Mississauga Hospital - Trillium Health Partners, where she was declared deceased at 4:36PM. We await the autopsy, to learn the official cause of her death.
- The family & the community are working on funeral arrangements to accord a dignified burial. Delphina will be buried in Kenya, close to her family.

It is particularly disheartening that this tragedy occurred during Black History Month, a time when Canadians are encouraged to reflect on the contributions of Black individuals and confront the ongoing struggles they face. Instead, we find ourselves mourning the loss of another member of our community, highlighting the persistent issues of racism and neglect that African people continue to endure in Canada.

While we express gratitude to the federal government for extending the Decade for People of African Descent, we must also acknowledge that this tragedy underscores the urgent need for more comprehensive and immediate action to address racism and

neglect toward African people in Canada at all levels of government. The extension of the Decade for People of African Descent is a step in the right direction, but it is clear that much more needs to be done to ensure the safety, dignity, and well-being of African Canadians and by extension their African brothers and sisters who have come to us seeking refuge.

“We are not asking for special treatment, just equal treatment to the African Refugees as other refugee claimants who have come to Canada.”

— Pastor Eddie Jjumba, Miliken Church

It is unacceptable that members of our community continue to suffer and die due to inadequate support, systemic barriers, and neglect. This collective plea for answers and solutions is not just a call for justice for the victims and their families but a demand for immediate and systemic change;

- We implore all levels of government to take immediate action to prioritise the well-being of African migrants, addressing root causes such as inadequate housing, healthcare, and systemic racism.
- We demand increased government funding for direct support to unhoused populations, including culturally appropriate services and operational capacity for community-level shelters.
- We advocate for targeted funding to African Canadian groups and other refugee serving agencies, prioritising wraparound support to address the overcrowded and overflowing shelter sector.
- We call for accountability, transparency, and concrete action to address injustices, prevent further loss of life, and collaborate with stakeholders to implement effective measures for a dignified and respectful community.

As a united coalition of African Canadian groups, refugee serving organizations, faith groups, frontline service workers, health organizations, and other civil society groups, we will not rest until justice is served, and meaningful change is achieved. Our coalition stands united, committed to working collaboratively with government officials, community leaders, and stakeholders to develop and implement concrete measures that will prevent further tragedies.

We urge all Canadians to join us in demanding justice, accountability, and a future where all members of our community are treated with dignity and respect. We also ask all

Canadians to stand in solidarity with Delphina Ngigi's family and loved ones by supporting them financially as they prepare to send the remains of the Deceased back home [Kenya] so her family can say their goodbyes. We failed to receive her with dignity, let us at least bury her with dignity.

Donation can be directed to; **Rev. Susan Karanja**, via **e-transfer**, at; delphinabereavement@gmail.com, or by calling the following line **647-803-8191**

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For media inquiries and further information, please contact:

Contact Information

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Lead Organizers & Agencies in Solidarity:

Kenyan Community in Ontario (KCO), Sauti Yetu Organization, Dominion House of Hope, Dominion Church, Rwandan Canadian Healing Centre (RCHC), Kenyan Canadian Association (KCA), Finch Ave Community Center, Black Women's Institute for Health, African Canadian Social Development Council, Pilgrim Feast Tabernacles, Delta Family Resources Centre, Crisis in the City, Contagious Hope Network, Black Opportunity Fund, John Easton Mills Society, African Centre for Refugees, KabeFoodsInc., Centre Francophone du Grand Toronto, Toronto Drop-In Network, Ethiopian Association, OCASI- Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants, La Passerelle-I.D.E., Christie Refugee Welcome Centre, Margaret's Housing and Community Services, Foundation For Black Communities (FFBC), Matthew House Toronto, Auberge Francophone, CEE Centre For Young Black Professionals, Anglican Diocese of Toronto, Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Loretto Sisters), TAIBU Community Health Centre, CP Planning, Islington United Church's Poverty Awareness Committee and Social Justice Committee, All Saints Church-Community Centre - Toronto, Bloordale United Church, Our City Toronto, Rosedale United Church, Overlap Associates_, Alliance for Healthier Communities, Miracle Arena Shelter, Newmarket African Caribbean Canadian Association, Milliken Church, Canadian Black Clergy and Allies, Sojourn House: Home, Our Lady's Missionaries, David Walsh, Lawrence Park Community Church, Seeds of Hope, Canadian Associations of Jews and Muslims, Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture(CCVT), BlackNorth Initiative, Learning Enrichment Foundation(LEF), Alliance for Healthier Communities, New Nakfa, Uganda Muslim Association Of Canada, Ghanaian Canadian Association of Ontario (GCAO), Romero House, Beautiful Foundation, Canadian association of Rwandan Youth - CARY Toronto, and countless others.