



INDO-CARIBBEAN CANADIAN ASSOCIATION

www.indocaribcdn.com

Land Acknowledgement Statement of the Indo-Caribbean Canadian Association

Adopted: June 2024

Approver: Management Board of the Indo-Caribbean Canadian Association

Content Warning: *This statement addresses racism, racial violence, and the continued support of systemic and institutional oppression. This content may be difficult or upsetting for some readers. Please take care of yourself as you read.*

Respecting The Lands, Waters, and Indigenous Peoples

The Indo-Caribbean Canadian Association (ICCA) operates on the unceded, stolen, and treated traditional territories of diverse Indigenous nations, including Two-Spirit and LGBTQIA+ Indigenous communities.

We honour, recognize, and respect Indigenous Peoples as rights holders and stewards of the lands and waters on which we are blessed to live, work, and play. ICCA's main office is located in Tkarón:to (colonially known as Toronto) which is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the New Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississauga and Chippewa bands. These lands and waters are the traditional homes and territories of and cared for by the Anishinaabeg, Wendat, Chippewa, Haudenosaunee, and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

Currently, the majority of in-person ICCA programming takes place in the Greater Toronto Area, which also includes the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, Alderville First Nation, Hiawatha First Nation, Curve Lake First Nation, the Chippewa Nations of Georgina Island, Beausoleil, and Rama, and Ottawa, built on unceded Anishinaabe Algonquin Nation territory. As we expand our engagement across Canada we will continue to honour and acknowledge the lands, waters, and Indigenous peoples.

Our Experience as Colonized Peoples

As people from the Indo-Caribbean diaspora, living in Canada we are part of a 'double diaspora'. Our people originally came from South Asia. After 1834, enslaved Africans were emancipated, however, facing labour shortages, European colonial nations (mainly Britain) transported hundreds of thousands of South Asians to their colonies in the Caribbean, Africa, and SouthEast Asia as indentured servants. Many were forcibly brought against their will across the *kala pani* (black waters) and committed to work the land for lucrative crops such as sugar cane. Most indentured servants and their descendants stayed on in their new homes when their period of indentureship (typically 5 years minimum) ended.

The lands where our ancestors were settled and worked were also cared for by Indigenous groups. These stewards of the lush rich lands and beautiful waters included the Akawaio, Akurio, Arawak (Taíno), Arekuna, Carib (Karinya/Kalina), Ciboney, Kwamalasamutu, Makushi, Patamona, Saloema (Taruma), Wai Wai, Wapichan, and Warao Peoples.



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We acknowledge that our Indo-Caribbean diaspora are the descendants of indentured servants, and recognize that we have benefitted from their struggles, toil, and complex migration histories. As racialized settlers in these lands and waters, we also hold special responsibilities to educate our community on Indigenous histories and the current lives of Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island and the Caribbean. As fellow colonized peoples we are committed to advancing Indigenous sovereignty and recognize that it is deeply and inextricably linked to collective liberation and decolonization.

Present Day ReconciliACTION

Where reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, reconciliACTION is a meaningful action that moves reconciliation forward.

Indigenous peoples are the original stewards of the lands and water of Turtle Island. But the corrosive implications of 500 years of colonization continue. Indigenous people are still impacted by the racist institutions established through colonialism. Indigenous people face high rates of police violence, incarceration, removal of children by child welfare services, and women, girls, and Two-Spirited people are significantly more likely to go missing or be murdered. Indigenous communities experience disproportionate impacts of environmental injustices leading to higher death and illness rates of people, and systemic pollution impacting lands, waters, and non-human allies.

ICCA stands in solidarity with Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island and the Caribbean. We are committed to ongoing reflection, learning, and enacting authentic reconciliACTIONS in our programs, resources, and services.

We will actively work on moving from acknowledgement to long-term solidarity, kinship, and relationship-building “in a good way” with Indigenous communities. We commit to enacting cultural humility. We recognize that reconciliation and decolonization are not metaphors, but actions that require an ongoing and unwavering commitment to social justice and equity.

Resources To Deepen Learning

- [The Witness Blanket](#)
- [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#)
- [UN SDGs connection to GC](#)
- “In a good way” is an expression used by many Aboriginal communities to denote participation that honors tradition and spirit. Among the Anishinaabe people, this is embodied through the Seven Grandfathers Teachings of wisdom, love, respect, bravery, honesty, humility, and truth. [Research Done in “A Good Way”: The Importance of Indigenous Elder Involvement in HIV Community-Based Research \(2015\)](#)
- [View the “In a Good Way” video from the University of Calgary’s Office of Indigenous Engagement](#)
- [Reconciliation vs. ReconciliACTION](#) (Gord Downie and Chanie Wenjack Fund)



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Mental Health Support

- [Indo-Caribbean Mental Health Professional Directory](#) (Brown Gyal Diary)
- [BIPOC Healing Centre Services](#)
- [Cognitive Insights Counselling](#)
- [Hope for Wellness Helpline](#) offers culturally competent counsellors to support Indigenous people across Canada. (Government of Canada).