



First Minister Nicola Sturgeon MSP
Scottish Parliament
Holyrood
Edinburgh EH99 1SP
(By email to: firstminister@gov.scot)

9th June 2020

Dear First Minister,

Immediate action for racial equality in Scotland

The past week has seen widespread support for the Black Lives Matter movement across the world. In Scotland, Black and minority ethnic people have come together to publicly demand racial justice, and the allyship of decision makers is vital to achieving this. We have seen personal support for BLM by many Members of the Scottish Parliament, including yourself, but I know you will be the first to say words themselves are not enough. I write to you today to ask for urgent action on five crucial areas of Government policy that are within the power of your Government to implement.

The Race Equality Framework for Scotland 2016-2030 and associated Race Equality Action Plan set out the Scottish Government's ethos and provide some welcome steps towards change, but there is limited evidence of impact so far. This is partly because there are a number of very specific blockages to progress on racial equality in Scotland that have not been adequately addressed to date. None of these issues are new; CRER and others have raised them consistently over the years, but if we don't get the basic building blocks in place then it will be difficult to achieve real progress going forward.

First Minister, if genuine progress on racial equality in Scotland is to be made, we believe that immediate action now on the following specific, achievable points is essential:

1. Develop an action plan with annual targets to support achievement of the existing commitment on fair representation for minority ethnic people in the Scottish Government workforce by 2025.
2. Amend the Curriculum for Excellence Social Studies benchmarks to include a specific experiences and outcomes measure: 'I understand Scotland's historical role in empire, colonialism and transatlantic slavery, and the diversity of Scottish society in the past.'
3. Introduce mandatory recording of racist incidents and prejudice based bullying in Scotland's schools, with data to be collected, analysed and published by Scottish Government on an annual basis.
4. Include analysis and narrative on racial disparities within all progress reporting on the National Performance Framework, and where data disaggregated by ethnicity is not available, make the necessary investments or policy changes to address this.
5. Working with the existing group co-chaired by CRER and Glasgow City Council, fund a scoping study for the establishment of a national museum dedicated to illuminating Scotland's role in empire, colonialism, slavery and migration.

If you don't challenge racism—who will?

As stated previously, none of these issues are new, and we have ample evidence to demonstrate the necessity of these actions. We have continuously updated the evidence available to support the Scottish Government's development of the Race Equality Framework for Scotland 2016-2030, and would be happy to provide additional information on any of these issues.

Obviously, there is also an on-going need to develop work on other aspects of race equality, including activity by public sector bodies and others. We look forward to remaining involved in the long-term approaches set out within the Race Equality Framework for Scotland 2016-2030, and to hearing your response in regard to these linked but urgent areas for action.

Yoincerely,

Jatin Haria

Jatin Haria
Executive Director
Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights

(Given the widespread interest in these issues at this time, and in the hope of securing maximum unity of support for these actions, we will be placing this letter and any response in the public domain).