

Toronto, December 8th, 2021

## Declaration - La Passerelle-I.D.É. on the Radio-Canada article

### The audits of La Passerelle-I.D.E. closed, recommendations to be implemented

**La Passerelle-I.D.E.** continues to work for the integration and economic development of the Black and racialized Francophone community. We continue this work while also pursuing our legal action against the Toronto Star following that media outlet's defamatory and racially charged publication of false and misleading articles in April, 2019. While we regret the need to pursue this action, we look forward to the court ruling in our favour and exposing the racist undertones to the reporting around our organization. The information you have presented is from a preliminary audit of our organization, rather than final audit findings, and government briefing notes. Despite requests from La Passerelle-I.D.E. of the provincial government, La Passerelle-IDE has not been provided with a copy of any of these documents. We are now being asked to comment on selective passages without having seen the documents in their entirety. This is clearly unfair.

Further, we are deeply concerned with the commentary you have attributed to the Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development. The Minister is clear in his lack of regard for the findings of his ministry and, through his comments, indicates a willingness to attack our organization for political purposes. La Passerelle-IDE was the subject of an unlawful attempt by government officials to seize records and access private information. When government officials arrived at our offices, the offices of a Black-led not-for-profit integration and settlement agency, they demanded unfettered access to confidential information beyond the scope of their interest and outside of what they could legally demand. They did so in violation of our rights, and it was a lawyer from the Ontario Government who eventually instructed them to stop and leave the premises immediately.

Despite this, we were cooperative throughout with the Provincial government.

Following the spring of 2019, our organization undertook a series of audits and reviews of governance and operations. While it is true these audits identified areas for improvement in governance and in internal processes, none of these audits found fraud or intentional financial mismanagement and the vast majority

have resulted in continued partnership. As a result of this work, and with the support and guidance of many partners, La Passerelle-I.D.E. has taken many steps to implement governance reforms and improved financial management processes. We hope to receive governance accreditation of the Board of Directors in 2022. Our audited statements for 2020-21 delivered a clean audit opinion.

Our organization is a Francophone, new immigrant settlement and employment agency. Our board is composed of diverse members, inclusive of those with lived experience, professional qualifications, and deep cultural and community connections. Board directors are selected based on a policy and process contained in our Board Manual. Since 1994, La Passerelle-I.D.E. has accompanied thousands of Francophone immigrants to integrate into our society in order to contribute today to advancing the economic prosperity of Ontario.

The board and management are focused on the betterment of the lives of racialized francophones and their contribution to a bright and prosperous Ontario.