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Dear Marie-Josée Houle:

On behalf of the Government of Canada, I would like to thank you for your 2022-2023 Annual Report, *Advocating for Change: The Housing Crisis in Canada*. Pursuant to subsection 17(1) of the *National Housing Strategy Act* (NHS Act), I am pleased to respond to your report and its recommendations.

I would like to start by acknowledging your important work and numerous accomplishments over the past year, such as your review of homeless encampments and your referrals to the National Housing Council to establish two review panels – one on the financialization of purpose-built rental housing, which is currently underway, and the other on the failure to prevent and eliminate homelessness amongst women and gender-diverse people, particularly Indigenous women, gender-diverse, and Two-Spirit people. I appreciate your efforts and the work of your team to identify some of the most pressing housing challenges, seek to understand them through in-depth research and from the perspective of people with lived experience, and propose solutions to advance the right to adequate housing in Canada. I look forward to your findings and recommendations.

I recognize that many Canadians face challenges accessing housing that meets their needs and that they can afford. In the current economic environment, inflation has exacerbated affordability challenges, affecting the ability of many Canadians to meet day-to-day expenses, such as food, transportation, and housing. This situation is especially difficult for equity-deserving groups who are more likely to be in core housing need.

This is why Budget 2022 provided significant additional investments to help make housing more affordable, including \$1.5 billion to extend the Rapid Housing

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Initiative and \$475 million to provide a one-time \$500 payment to lower-income renters facing increased rents. In March 2023, the Prime Minister also announced the \$4 billion Housing Accelerator Fund. This program will provide incentive funding to local governments to create more housing. This is incredibly important, as the lack of housing supply is a key determinant of higher rents and home prices.

This year's federal budget builds on these investments. Most notably, it includes an additional \$4 billion over seven years to implement a co-developed Urban, Rural, and Northern Indigenous Housing Strategy. This is a meaningful step forward to address the housing needs of Indigenous peoples living in urban, rural, and northern communities.

Many of these investments are being made through the National Housing Strategy (NHS). In 2017, we launched the NHS, a 10-year, \$40 billion plan to help Canadians access housing that meets their needs and that they can afford. The NHS has grown considerably and is now a more than \$82-billion plan to improve housing outcomes for everyone in Canada.

As of March 31, 2023, federally delivered NHS initiatives have:

- Built or committed to build 107,519 new housing units,
- Repaired or committed to repair 123,984 housing units,
- Protected the affordability of 8,948 community housing units,
- Built, repaired, or financially supported 37,995 Indigenous and northern housing units, and
- Committed 32% of funding towards meeting the housing needs of women and their children.

As you note in your report, it is critical that the NHS be aligned with the obligations of the *National Housing Strategy Act*. This legislation, introduced by our government and which received Royal Assent in 2019, declares that the housing policy of the Government of Canada is to recognize the right to adequate housing as a fundamental human right affirmed in international law and to further the progressive realization of the right to adequate housing as recognized in the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*.

The legislation also requires the Government to maintain a national housing strategy that takes into account key principles of a human rights-based approach to housing and meets the following requirements:

- a) sets out a long-term vision for housing in Canada that recognizes the importance of housing in achieving social, economic, health and environmental goals;
 - b) establishes national goals relating to housing and homelessness and identifies related priorities, initiatives, timelines and desired outcomes;
 - c) focuses on improving housing outcomes for persons in greatest need;
- and,

- d) provides for participatory processes to ensure the ongoing inclusion and engagement of civil society, stakeholders, vulnerable groups and persons with lived experience of housing need, as well as those with lived experience of homelessness.

The NHS considers key principles of a human rights-based approach to housing, including non-discrimination, inclusion, participation, and accountability. It recognizes that housing is essential to the inherent dignity and well-being of the person and to building sustainable and inclusive communities, and it sets ambitious targets. Through the NHS, we are making progress toward the realization of the international right to adequate housing. We are also working with housing stakeholders to improve the design and delivery of NHS programs and initiatives.

While we are making strides under the NHS, I agree that there are ways to bring the NHS into greater alignment with the *National Housing Strategy Act*. The past five years have demonstrated progress in this regard, and we will continue to build on this progress over the next five years of the Strategy. In the following pages, as a response to your annual report and the recommendations that you issued on National Housing Day 2022, I will describe the government's actions that are contributing to this progress.

Housing for Those Greatest in Need

In line with your recommendations to re-design the NHS to better target those in greatest need, I wish to highlight the ways in which the federal government is continuing to invest in greater housing affordability through the NHS.

As you note in your report, the Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI) has been a particularly effective program, providing funding to facilitate the rapid construction of new permanent affordable housing units for people and populations who are vulnerable and who are prioritized under the NHS. With \$2.5 billion, the first two rounds of the initiative committed more than 10,000 affordable housing units, including 4,241 units for Indigenous people, 2,522 units for people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness, and 1,300 units for seniors. With \$1.5 billion, Round 3 of the initiative is well underway, with all agreements under the Cities Stream (outside of Quebec) in place and applications under review for the Projects Stream. To date, under Round 3, \$442.51 million has been committed to support the creation of 1,275 new affordable units.

We are also working with the Co-operative Housing Federation of Canada and the co-operative housing sector to co-develop a new Co-operative Housing Development Program. With \$1.5 billion in loans and contributions, this will be the the largest investment in co-operative housing in three decades. Co-ops provide secure, stable housing, and support the development of inclusive communities, while generally having rents below market rates.

Furthermore, the National Housing Co-Investment Fund (NHCF) incentivizes the creation of units across the housing continuum and prioritizes projects targeting vulnerable groups. Historically, NHCF projects have exceeded the program's minimum requirements for affordability.

In your report, you recommend that NHS programs should create purpose-built housing to address the needs of people experiencing inadequate housing and homelessness. As you know, a foundational principle of the NHS is to address the housing needs of the most vulnerable, including women and children fleeing domestic violence, seniors, Indigenous people, those experiencing or at-risk of homelessness, people with disabilities, those dealing with mental health and addiction issues, veterans, the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, young adults, racialized groups including Black Canadians, and recent immigrants and refugees. The NHS prioritizes housing for these groups and focuses on understanding their housing needs to inform policies and programs.

Under the NHS, funding is set aside to address the housing needs of specific groups. For example, there is a \$50 million carve-out under the NHCF to support Black-led organizations to build housing, as well as more affordable housing for Black renter households in Canada. This carve-out will build upon the various investments and initiatives undertaken by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to support Black Canadians facing housing needs, including a joint investment of \$40 million with Habitat for Humanity Canada to support homeownership for Black families across the country. This investment is another step forward in the federal government's work to alleviate inequities faced by Black Canadians and support Black Canadians in core housing need.

A key initiative cost-matched and delivered by provinces and territories under the NHS is the Canada Housing Benefit (CHB), which provides financial assistance directly to families in housing need. We are in the process of expanding the CHB with dedicated funds for survivors of gender-based violence to further provide affordability support to those in need.

The \$500 one-time top-up to the CHB provided some relief for low-income renters facing housing affordability challenges. The initiative helped some 800,000 renters across Canada.

We recognize that, each year, thousands of Canadians experience homelessness or are at risk of becoming homeless; COVID-19 exacerbated this issue across the country. As you note in your report, there has been a visible rise not only in unsheltered homelessness but also in encampments. We continue to work across the federal government, with provinces and territories, Indigenous partners, municipalities, and community service providers to find permanent long-term solutions to homelessness.

I am proud that investments announced in Budget 2021 and Budget 2022 to address homelessness are coming to fruition. As you may know, we allocated \$562.2 million to Reaching Home from 2024-25 to 2025-26 to continue to provide increased annual funding to communities. This brings the Government of Canada's investment to nearly \$4 billion over nine years to address homelessness through Reaching Home. Between April 1, 2019, and March 31, 2022, Reaching Home supported more than 5,000 projects, which provided more than 87,000 people with homelessness prevention support and placed over 46,000 people in more stable housing.

We also launched a new Veteran Homelessness Program (VHP), designed to complement existing federal programming and provide comprehensive services and supports to veterans experiencing or at risk of homelessness. This new program will deliver \$79.1 million over five years to give veterans the best chance of long-term success in being rehoused. Funding through the VHP will also support research on veteran homelessness and capacity building. Delivered by Infrastructure Canada (INFC) with support from Veteran Affairs Canada, the program started accepting applications as of April 28, 2023.

In your report, you urge federal, provincial, and territorial governments to take action in response to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child's concluding observations and its housing-related recommendations. I wish to inform you that discussions are ongoing across all orders of government about the recommendations stemming from Canada's appearance before the committee in May 2022 and are being informed by engagements with civil society organizations.

The federal government is also taking meaningful steps to help ensure that persons with disabilities have equal access to housing. Under the NHCF, we are aiming to create at least 2,400 new housing units for people with developmental disabilities by 2027-28. As of March 31, 2023, CMHC committed to funding the creation of 901 new units targeted to persons with developmental disabilities. The NHS also supports the development of more inclusive and accessible communities through minimum accessibility requirements and the prioritization of projects that exceed them. For example, new construction projects under the NHCF must have either full universal design for common areas and dwelling units or have 20% of dwelling units meet accessibility standards and have barrier-free common areas.

We are also making progress toward targets established under the NHCF to build, repair, and renew housing for seniors and survivors of gender-based violence. As of March 31, 2023, we have committed to:

- Make 1,123 shelter spaces or transitional housing units available for survivors of gender-based violence and 6,484 housing units for seniors; and,
- Repair or renew 302 shelter spaces or transitional housing units for survivors of gender-based violence and 43,922 senior units.

The Government of Canada also aims for at least 25% of NHS investments to serve the unique needs of women and their children. As of March 31, 2023, the NHS has committed an estimated \$10.44 billion toward the housing needs of women and their children, which includes funding for the construction, repair, and support of 265,681 housing units. This represents 32% of all NHS funding committed. We continue to report on this target on the Place to Call Home website at placetocallhome.ca.

The NHS recognizes that women and their children are disproportionately impacted by housing need and that the intersection of identities such as race, sexual orientation, age, and socio-economic status create distinct types of housing barriers for them. To ensure the housing needs of diverse people are met, the NHS is grounded in a Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) approach, focused on diversity and inclusion. This involves understanding the needs of people of various and intersecting identities and assessing how they may experience NHS programming. In the development of policy and program proposals, GBA Plus is conducted to ensure that housing policies reflect these considerations.

I agree with your recommendation that the NHS must demonstrate measurable results for people most in need. As noted in our response to the Auditor General's report on chronic homelessness, we are committed to improving research and data practices and transparency in reporting on the progress of NHS investments, particularly on the impact of the NHS on those in greatest need. CMHC is working to improve its data and measurement practices and is undertaking internal research to better understand the effectiveness of housing policy measures, including the NHS.

For instance, CMHC has initiated a record-linkage project in partnership with Statistics Canada which will provide demographic and outcome-based data on households housed in NHS units, including disaggregated data that will support intersectional GBA Plus.

The above are examples of the Government of Canada's efforts to support those in greatest housing need, but we recognize that the magnitude of the need is significant, and we must therefore continue to improve the NHS so that more Canadians can have a place to call home.

Indigenous Housing

The Government of Canada's responsibility to Indigenous people is one we take seriously. Indigenous housing challenges are unique, complex and multifaceted, with Indigenous households experiencing some of the worst housing conditions in Canada. Nearly 20% of Indigenous people live in housing that requires major repairs, and more than 20% live in crowded housing. Census results from 2021 show some improvement, with the share of Indigenous people living in crowded

homes or a home that requires a major repair declining. But more needs to be done.

Advancing greater self-determination for housing by First Nations, Inuit and Métis organizations and communities is a priority, which is why we co-developed, with National Indigenous Organizations, the distinctions-based housing strategies: the National First Nations Housing and Related Infrastructure Strategy, the Inuit Nunangat Housing Strategy, and the Métis Nation Housing Sub Accord. We continue to work with Indigenous partners to implement these strategies, which support their vision of self-determination and lead to better social and economic outcomes for their communities.

The Métis Housing Sub Accord has led to real, measurable results. As of March 2021 (our most recent reporting), 1,158 housing units have been bought or built, 2,096 units have been repaired or renewed, and 7,584 units have been subsidized for rental support. These outcomes are an average of over 300% of the Sub-Accords targets.

Since 2016 and as of December 31, 2022, through dedicated on-reserve housing programming, Indigenous Services Canada and CMHC have worked together to support First Nations to build, renovate or retrofit 29,421 homes on reserve, of which 19,810 are complete. Building on this work, Budget 2022 outlined \$4.3 billion over seven years to improve and expand Indigenous housing in Canada, which includes:

- \$2.4 billion over five years to support First Nations housing on reserves;
- \$565 million over five years to support housing in Self-Governing and Modern Treaty Holder First Nations communities;
- \$845 million over seven years to support housing in Inuit communities; and,
- \$190 million over seven years for housing in Métis communities, including \$35 million to four Métis groups in the Northwest Territories.

These new investments will support the building and renovation of thousands of homes, but we know the gaps remain large. The Government of Canada is committed to closing the socioeconomic gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples in Canada, and to supporting strong and resilient First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities.

While the distinctions-based housing strategies and Budget 2022 investments are an important step forward, an estimated 540,000 Indigenous people in Canada live in urban, rural, and northern areas and experience a higher rate of housing need and homelessness compared to non-Indigenous people. Prior to 2022, no funding was earmarked to support the urban, rural, and northern housing needs.

To address the housing needs of Indigenous people living in urban, rural and northern communities, the Government of Canada is working to co-develop, with

Indigenous partners, an Urban, Rural, and Northern (U.R.N.) Indigenous Housing Strategy. A comprehensive engagement process is underway to inform the co-development of the Strategy with the National Urban, Rural and Northern Indigenous Housing Coalition. This process includes National Indigenous Organizations and other Indigenous partners conducting their own engagement activities with their respective memberships. As co-development will take time, Indigenous Services Canada is investing \$282 million for immediate U.R.N. Indigenous housing needs. The federal government is committing \$4 billion over seven years, starting in 2024-25, for the implementation of this much awaited Strategy.

The NHS also supports Indigenous and northern housing and prioritizes the housing needs of Indigenous people. This includes: the \$420 -million Indigenous Shelter and Transitional Housing Initiative, which will build a minimum of 38 shelters and 50 new transitional homes for Indigenous women, children, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people escaping gender-based violence; \$44.8 million over five years for 12 emergency shelters in Indigenous communities and the northern territories, which has been distributed through the Shelter Initiative for Indigenous Women and Children escaping family violence; \$138.1 million through the NHCF; \$200 million through the Canada Community Housing Initiative; and \$401.8 million from 2019-20 to 2022-23 through Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy, including investments for the Territorial Homelessness funding stream; and \$300 million through the Funding for the Northern Territories.

In addition, through investments and ongoing partnerships with the territorial governments, the Government of Canada is empowering its territorial partners to ensure that residents of the North have access to sustainable and safe housing that will meet their needs, and to support the holistic health and welfare of northerners using "made-in-the-North" solutions. To address housing needs in the territories, the federal government invested \$150 million over two years to support affordable housing and infrastructure in the North and provided \$50 million directly to the Governments of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Specifically, these investments respond to the territorial calls for greater support to address the northern housing crisis that is driven by geographic challenges, unique building conditions, climate change, and often challenging economic conditions.

As of March 31, 2023, \$3.79 billion has been conditionally or financially committed through federally delivered NHS supply initiatives, including commitments under the NHCF for urban Indigenous housing, emergency Indigenous shelters, and housing in the territories. This includes funding for 21,372 units through Indigenous and northern housing projects, of which 16,800 are for new construction and 4,572 are for repair or renewal. Commitments made to date will support the construction and repair of:

- 10,376 units on reserve;
- 1,691 units in the territories;
- 8,501 Indigenous units in urban areas; and,

- 804 Indigenous units in rural or remote areas.

The Government of Canada has committed through the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (UNDA) to implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), including by prioritizing work that improves housing outcomes for First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples. We acknowledge that Indigenous Peoples have the right to determine and co-develop priorities and strategies per Article 23 of UNDRIP. The Department of Justice is the federal lead on this work in partnership with First Nations, Inuit and Métis to better understand their priorities, help shape an action plan to meet the objectives of UNDRIP, and begin to identify potential measures for aligning federal laws with UNDRIP.

The federal government is exploring options with First Nations on their proposal to transfer the care and control of funding for on-reserve housing programs, currently delivered by CMHC, to First Nations. This proposed measure is included in the final UNDA Action Plan that will be released in June 2023. In the spirit of reconciliation, the way forward on transfer of care and control of on-reserve housing programs will be co-developed with First Nations, Modern Treaty Holders and Self-Governing Indigenous Governments.

While we are proud of what we have done to improve housing outcomes for Indigenous peoples and advance reconciliation, we recognize there is still much work to do. We will continue to work with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Indigenous partners to improve housing infrastructure, support education and childcare, take action on the tragedy of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and 2SLGTQQIA+ people, and respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

Making Housing More Affordable for Canadians

More and more Canadians across the income spectrum struggle to afford housing costs. The supply of housing has not kept pace with demand, resulting in escalating rents and home prices over many years and the loss of affordability. To restore affordability by 2030, CMHC estimates that we will need to build an additional 3.5 million housing units beyond what is currently planned.

The federal government is committed to doing its part to increase the supply of housing and improve housing affordability for people living in Canada. As of March 31, 2023, CMHC has made over \$29.39 billion in funding commitments for the NHS. A part of this funding will support the creation of 49,866 affordable units from a total 106,501 new units and repair 123,984 existing units. In addition, over \$4.3B in funding has been provided by CMHC and the provincial and territorial governments as part of the Housing Partnership Framework.

The federal government is committed to doing its part to increase the supply of housing and improve housing affordability for people living in Canada. As of March 31, 2023, CMHC the federal government has made over \$32.1 billion in funding commitments through for the NHS. A part of this funding will support the creation of 49,866 affordable units from a total 107,519 new units, and the repair of 123,984 existing units, through federal NHS initiatives. In addition, over \$4.3 billion in funding has been provided by the federal, provincial and territorial governments as part of the Housing Partnership Framework.

Given the interconnected nature of Canada's housing system, it is important to create supply across the housing continuum, from shelters and transitional housing, to community housing, to affordable housing and homeownership. While it is important that we continue to invest in non-market housing supply, we must also continue to invest in market housing. Failure to invest in market housing – including rental – will mean there are fewer market housing options for those in social and affordable housing to move to when they find themselves in a better financial position. A lack of purpose-built rental units poses a barrier for those who can afford higher priced units, forcing them to remain in units which could otherwise be freed up for lower-income families. More broadly, investments in market housing contribute to improvements in housing affordability, which benefit middle- and lower-income Canadians.

The Rental Construction Financing initiative (RCFi) is directly aligned with these supply ambitions as it finances large, purpose-built rental housing in markets where project viability is often challenging. Program participants said the RCFi is responsible for making rental construction more attractive than condo construction, that RCFi funding contributed to larger and more energy efficient projects than initially planned, and that the RCFi expedited the funding process, bringing more units to market quicker. Furthermore, RCFi projects must have a minimum 20% of units in a building at 30% of median household income, and projects must commit to maintaining affordability for 10 years. This is especially important given that average rent growth for two-bedroom purpose-built apartments jumped to 5.6% in 2022, up from 3% in 2021, which represents a new annual high.

As a toolkit of complementary housing programs and initiatives that address needs across the continuum, the NHS is ideally positioned to support the creation of different types of supply. Furthermore, significant collaboration and coordination across federal departments and agencies, with other orders of government, and with private and not-for-profit stakeholders, is needed to solve housing supply and affordability challenges. The NHS prioritizes and facilitates these partnerships.

Local governments have an important role in creating the conditions to remove systemic barriers to housing supply in their jurisdictions. The removal of

restrictive zoning and creating greater certainty and improved timeliness in housing approvals and building processes are important levers that local governments have to create more homes, faster. To help facilitate this change, as mentioned previously, the Government of Canada recently announced the \$4-billion Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) which will provide funding to local governments, including Indigenous communities, to encourage initiatives aimed at removing barriers to new housing supply.

The HAF also encourages the development of complete, low-carbon and climate-resilient communities that are affordable, inclusive, equitable and diverse. The goal of the program is to create long-lasting systemic change and accelerate the supply of housing across Canada, creating at least 100,000 more housing units than would have occurred without the program. To monitor the impact of this program, CMHC will collect housing unit projections from applicants along with annual progress reports and permit data and will report on the impact of the program on a regular basis. Further, early wins from the HAF will be used to ensure greater consistency in the federal housing approach and, as committed through Budget 2022, establish a strong foundation for aligning future infrastructure investments with enhanced housing outcomes.

The design of the HAF was informed by consultations with several stakeholders, including provinces and territories, Indigenous groups, housing providers, the Canadian Urban Institute, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, and Canadians more broadly through a public call for ideas, as well as recommendations provided by the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills, and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities (HUMA).

With respect to your recommendations on the financialization of housing, I eagerly anticipate the report of the HUMA committee on the impacts of financialization on Canada's housing system, and the report of the National Housing Council review panel on the financialization of purpose-built rental housing. Along with the research reports on this topic that were commissioned by your Office, this will complement the federal government's work to better understand the scope of this issue and its impacts.

Interdepartmental and Intergovernmental Coordination

We agree there is a need for greater interdepartmental coordination to reduce housing need and homelessness and are taking steps to strengthen this coordination. Housing, homelessness and other intersecting priorities, including immigration, infrastructure, Indigenous strategies and programs, veterans, and the needs of other vulnerable groups, are considered at a variety of federal interdepartmental committees. Across the federal government, we are working together to understand and solve interrelated challenges.

Further to the findings in the Auditor General's recent report on chronic homelessness, INFC and CMHC have agreed to work together to better align, coordinate, and integrate their efforts to prevent and reduce homelessness and chronic homelessness.

Beyond the NHS, greater collaboration and coordination between INFC and CMHC is needed because housing and infrastructure are naturally linked due to the cost-effectiveness and economic benefits of co-locating infrastructure with dense and concentrated housing, and because both have impacts on quality of life, community health and inclusivity, emissions reduction, and more. We are committed to leveraging public infrastructure investments to accelerate housing supply and improve affordability for Canadians.

We will be working with our provincial, territorial and municipal partners to ensure that they commit to and deliver on ambitious housing targets as a condition for federal infrastructure funding – that will help improve housing supply across the continuum, preserve and increase the stock of affordable housing and address housing pressures across our communities in an evidence-based manner. Coordinating and integrating housing with infrastructure, such as through transit-oriented communities, will enable us to continue addressing housing affordability in a way that is cohesive with the integrated regional approach to infrastructure. It will also ensure that we enable and build the right kind of housing supply, that addresses the need of Canadians who need it the most and consequently enable the development of complete, inclusive, sustainable communities across the country.

We are working to establish forums to promote collaboration between INFC, CMHC and other federal departments. An interdepartmental Assistant Deputy Minister Committee on Housing and Infrastructure co-chaired by INFC and CMHC was formed to support me and the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities and Intergovernmental Affairs in delivering the government's housing and infrastructure priorities. This collaboration ensures coordination and good governance of the housing portfolio and a seamless federal housing and homelessness policy continuum.

Recognizing that housing challenges are complex, multi-jurisdictional, and well beyond any individual organization's mandate, a new interdepartmental Deputy Minister Committee on Housing and Homelessness is being established. The Committee will allow for enhanced coordination and alignment of federal initiatives to support the development of a whole-of-government approach to address housing and homelessness issues.

I also agree that there is a need for greater intergovernmental coordination. Federal, provincial, and territorial governments are primary partners in housing and have a shared responsibility and complementary roles for housing. The

federal government has bilateral agreements with all 13 provinces and territories, representing over \$15 billion in joint funding over 10 years, from 2018-19 to 2027-28, to protect, renew and expand community housing, and support provincial and territorial priorities related to housing repair, construction, and affordability. We routinely engage with provinces and territories through the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Forum on Housing and will be seeking opportunities to expand our collaboration.

I thank you once again for this report and its recommendations. Your work as the Federal Housing Advocate is an important element of our human rights-based to housing and will inform our efforts to reduce housing need and homelessness, including through the NHS. The NHS is constantly evolving, and accountability mechanisms such as your role and that of the National Housing Council ensure that it continues to evolve in a more impactful direction. As always, I look forward to working together to continue furthering Canada's progressive realization of the international right to adequate housing.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ahmed Hussien', written in a cursive style.

The Honourable Ahmed Hussien, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion