**Toronto – March 19, 2018**: In 1966, the United Nations declared March 21 as the **International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination** to commemorate the victims of the 1960 Sharpeville massacre in apartheid-era South Africa; where 69 people were killed by government forces following a peaceful protest against racial discrimination.

In Canada, March 21 is a day to remember and acknowledge the struggles and challenges faced by racialized and Indigenous communities throughout history. It is also a time to recognize the efforts of racialized communities and allies to call out racism, xenophobia, intolerance, and other discriminatory practices.

Diversity is one the key pillars of our union, and inclusion is at the heart of creating equitable and anti-oppressive spaces for every person in the workplace and in our communities. Over the past three years, UFCW Canada and its Local Unions engaged in multi-year Diversity and Inclusion training that included all UFCW Canada leadership and staff – more than 700 in total – in every UFCW Canada Local Union across the country.

But our work must not stop there. We must continue to take every measure possible to ensure that members across the country see their union family as a vehicle to support equity and reconciliation measures in the workplace and in the community. Racial justice also means access to leadership positions in organizations and forums where these important conversations can take shape.

This year marks the **70th anniversary of the International Declaration of Human** **Rights** and its fundamental principle that all of us are born equal in dignity and rights, without distinction of any kind. Let us remember that on March 21, as we recommit to challenging racism in all its forms.

In solidarity,

Paul R. Meinema
National President UFCW Canada