



# DEBATES OF THE SENATE

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## **PAN AFRICAN HERITAGE MUSEUM**

Statement by:  
The Honourable Patricia Bovey

Wednesday, May 3, 2023

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### PAN AFRICAN HERITAGE MUSEUM

**Hon. Patricia Bovey:** Honourable senators, today I want to update you on the Pan African Heritage Museum. As I have said before, it is being built now in Accra, Ghana, and will open in the fall of 2024.

It is particularly fitting that the High Commissioner for Ghana is here with us today. I thank him, his country and the Ghanaian visionaries whose initiative is honouring and presenting the African global diaspora, including ours in Canada.

As a member of the international curatorial council on this project, I developed a Canada-wide discussion team of Black artists and historians from all artistic disciplines to develop the themes and approaches for Canada's virtual and in-person material exhibition in this museum. From that group, the content steering committee was formed. It is now a stand-alone independent charitable organization with a charitable tax number.

Thanks to a Foreign Affairs and International Trade Committee report titled *Cultural Diplomacy at the Front Stage of Canada's Foreign Policy*, the Canada Council for the Arts and Global Affairs Canada have been funders of this project.

Six Black Canadian professional curators have been hired, one for each region and two for central Canada, given the size of their

diaspora. The virtual aspect is progressing really well, and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights has become their partner.

Next, they will engage with the creative challenge of the real exhibition, a challenge I know they will rise to. Canada's participation will be reflective of the honesty of Canada's Black history — multi-generational, refugee and immigrant — today's rich artistic expression by Canadian Black artists and will simultaneously set an exciting platform for our young people and generations to come.

I applaud the Canadian team and their initiatives that will bear positive, interesting fruit.

Your excellency, I want to thank you and Ghana for your foresight with this project, and I want to thank all those involved in the Canadian expression in it. I particularly want to thank Chantal Gibson, poet, visual artist, professor and chair of the content steering group, for her commitment, energy, vision and support.

Colleagues, this is an important expression of our cultural diplomacy in which music, dance, theatre, writing, film and visual art will excite visitors around the world. Canada's Black artists are major contributors in every aspect of Canada's arts and cultural life, and are core to the global creative sector.

Thank you.

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