

City Council

Motion without Notice

MM43.30	ACTION			Ward: All
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Renewing the District of Jaffna - City of Toronto Memorandum of Understanding - by Mayor John Tory, seconded by Councillor Jennifer McKelvie

- * Notice of this Motion has not been given. A two-thirds vote is required to waive notice.*
- * This Motion is subject to referral to the Economic and Community Development Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*
- * This Motion has been deemed urgent by the Chair*

Recommendations

Mayor John Tory, seconded by Councillor Jennifer McKelvie, recommends that:

1. City Council endorse an extension of the existing District of Jaffna-City of Toronto Memorandum of Understanding for a two year term.
2. City Council reiterate its commitment to the collaborative advancement of the four main pillars of Good Governance, Education, Library Systems and Economic Development, as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding.
3. City Council direct the City Manager to work with the appropriate divisions and agencies and the District of Jaffna to action the initiatives outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding.

Summary

The District of Jaffna has requested an extension to the Memorandum of Understanding between Jaffna and Toronto.

Toronto is home to Canada's largest Sri Lankan and Tamil communities. Over thirty thousand people of Tamil origin live in Toronto, with a large number from Jaffna. Toronto and Jaffna remain in a position to learn from each other and work together on issues of common interest in order to advance our cities' social and economic sustainability and well-being.

Since March 2017, the City of Toronto has enjoyed a relationship with the District of Jaffna supported by a 4-year Memorandum of Understanding. The District of Jaffna-Toronto Memorandum of Understanding expired in 2021. While there is currently a moratorium in place which prevents the City from entering into new city-to city agreements while a review of Toronto's International Alliance Program is undertaken, there is no restriction on temporarily extending existing city-to-city agreements with other jurisdictions. The review of the International Alliance Program has been significantly delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and a report to City Council is expected in early 2023.

Unlike agreements with other cities that fall within the scope of the Toronto's International Alliance Program which are open-ended, a sunset clause was included in the original Memorandum of Understanding with Jaffna: after 4 years both cities must decide to renew the relationship agreement; otherwise it expires. This mechanism encourages our cities to innovate and helps to ensure that continued engagement yields tangible mutual benefits which take into account current circumstances and market opportunities.

Approving this Motion will allow the District of Jaffna and the City of Toronto to continue to share ideas, best practices, governance approaches and business development connections.

This Motion is urgent because the existing Memorandum of Understanding has expired and is required to continue the partnership involving the Toronto Public Library and the extension of an invitation to the Mayor of Jaffna to visit Toronto.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM43.30