

# Speech: Matt Hancock's speech to Parliament at the Urgency of Representation in the Media reception

I'd like to thank Act for Change, the Campaign for Broadcasting Equality & the TV collective for inviting me to speak here today. Each of you plays an important role in driving change, and I thank you for your work. It feels daunting to be the opening act for Sir Lenny Henry. So I'm not even going to try a joke.

But that's appropriate too because the need to see greater diversity on and off our screens is dead serious. Last August I was delighted to launch Project Diamond. It's a hugely ambitious attempt to collect very detailed data about who is employed in front of and behind the camera.

I look forward to seeing its first report later this year. Then we will see the real truth of how representative broadcasting is of the country.

I'm glad there's been some progress. Diversity is becoming integral among our major broadcasters. Diversity is now enshrined in the new BBC Charter. Channel 4 takes its diversity very seriously and both these have amazing apprenticeship schemes which drive diversity too.

I hope the new data from Project Diamond will force others to act. Because there is still much more to do. And there's particularly more to do in broadcasting. Only 1.5% of British TV programmes were made by a BAME Director, and only 14% of TV drama by a woman. Yet 14% of the population are from BAME backgrounds, and half the population are women.

And more than this, Broadcasting is special. You aren't only major and growing employers – important as that is. What we put on our screens represents the nation. It represents us overseas. It represents us to ourselves. It represents who we are, and who we hope to be.

So broadcasting must represent the whole nation. Broadcasting has a special responsibility to ensure every diverse voice from every part and every community of our great nation is represented, literally and figuratively. Broadcasting can and should celebrate the bonds that tie us together.

These bonds are strong, but need nurturing.

For it is a strong foundation of the bonds that tie us together that can then allow us with confidence to celebrate our diversity as a nation how each individual is beautifully unique, and how we are at our finest when we take joy from our differences and are strong, and open, and looking out to the whole world.

That is the vision that we have: of a dynamic, diverse, creative society, finding the best in everyone one of us and looking out confident to the

world.

So let us join together, and make that vision a reality.