



Canadian Council for Refugees Conseil canadien pour les réfugiés

Annual Report 2009-2010

Mission Statement

The Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) is a non-profit umbrella organization committed to the rights and protection of refugees in Canada and around the world and to the settlement of refugees and immigrants in Canada. The membership is made up of organizations involved in the settlement, sponsorship and protection of refugees and immigrants. The Council serves the networking, information exchange and advocacy needs of its membership.

Executive Committee

President - Wanda Yamamoto, Winnipeg
Past President - Elizabeth McWeeny, Thunder Bay
Vice-President - Roberto Jovel, Toronto / Rivka Augenfeld, Montreal
Treasurer - Yasmine Dossal, Toronto
Secretary - Lisa Wyndels, Toronto
Counsellors - Georges Bahaya, Edmonton; Oana Grigorescu, Ottawa; Deborah Isaacs, Vancouver; Gloria Nafziger, Toronto; Heather Neufeld; Jacqueline Rumiell, Windsor; Jeremias Tecu, Fredericton; Sylvain Thibault, Montréal

Working Group Chairs

Immigration & Settlement - Sherman Chan, Vancouver & Debbie Douglas, Toronto
Inland Protection - Rick Goldman, Montréal & Debbie Hill-Corrigan, Toronto
Overseas Protection & Sponsorship - Jennifer Mpungu, Vancouver & Mary Purkey, Lennoxville

Staff

Executive Director - Janet Dench
Office Manager - Guadalupe Macias
Settlement Policy Director - Meissoon Azzaria
Communication and Networking Coordinator - Colleen French
Conference Coordinator - Marisa Berry-Méndez
Policy and Program Assistant - Varka Kalaydzhieva
Youth Coordinator - Cynthia Beaudry
Office Assistant - Jasmine Minas Minassian / Mounia Oulias

From Wanda Yamamoto, CCR President

As I reflect on the first year of my term as CCR President, I can say it has been very busy. We have had much to do to respond to new issues and a worrying change in public opinion.

2010 began with the CCR's response to the earthquake in Haiti. The CCR's proposed special measures were broadly covered by the media and many elements were taken up by the government of Quebec.

Asking the question: 'Are we being fair?', the CCR and its members have brought significant public attention to long delays in processing at Canada's overseas visa posts, especially Nairobi. The good news is that the government has allocated some new resources to speed up processing, but more work needs to be done to ensure that all applications are treated fairly and in a timely manner.

Spring 2010 was spent addressing Bill C-11, "Refugee Reform" legislation which raised many issues and concerns for our communities. While there was a need for changes, the Bill had serious flaws that would potentially lead to refugees being deported to persecution.

Thanks to the hard work of many individuals and organizations, with leadership from the CCR, Members of Parliament from all political parties were persuaded to make important changes to the bill. As a result, the bill that was passed ensures all refugee claimants – regardless of country of origin – are able to tell their story and have access to an appeal.

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Wanda Yamamoto, second from right, at the CCR Consultation in Ottawa, May 2010.

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During this legislation process, we were concerned at how unaware the general public is of the realities faced by refugees. Unfortunately the government hasn't helped in this area. To address this, the CCR started a process to develop a communication strategy to enable CCR and its members to "persuade more Canadians that refugees deserve a high level of protection, both in Canada and abroad, and that Canada's refugee protection systems can be made to work well". We will be pursuing this strategy in the coming year – obviously the need is great!

I must give my thanks to Janet Dench and the staff at the CCR office for their dedication and hard work to keep on top of all of the issues. I also want to thank the Executive Members and the Working Group Chairs who provide the leadership in raising the issues and working with member agencies to address their concerns. In borrowing from the United Way messaging, "Without YOU, there would be NO WAY" we can do the work the CCR does.

We have much to do and the work is made easier with many hands and minds to move forward with our work.

Highlights of Activities 2009 - 2010

- > **Best interests of the child:** The best interests of the child have been a major theme in the last year. The CCR has highlighted its concerns for children in detention and children made stateless by Canada's new citizenship laws.



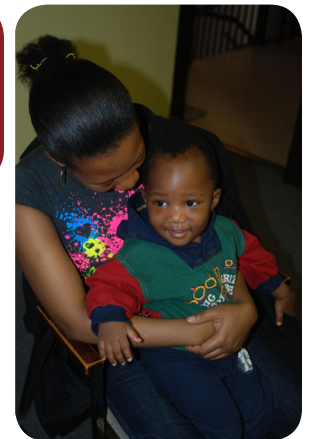
Amina and her children were featured in the report *Nairobi: Protection Delayed, Protection Denied*.

The upcoming review of Canada by the United Nations on our compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 2011 will provide another opportunity to address these concerns.

- > **Haiti:** The CCR joined many other groups in urging the government to respond to January's earthquake in Haiti with special immigration measures for Haitians, many of whom arrived in Canada as refugees.

- > **Long delays in processing:** In the past year, the CCR issued several reports, including *Nairobi: Protection Delayed, Protection Denied*. This report highlights the extraordinarily long processing times at overseas visa offices, focusing on cases of refugee family reunification and privately sponsored refugees. There was significant media coverage generated by the report. CCR members found it a useful tool in explaining the situation to a variety of audiences, including members of private sponsorship groups, members of the general public and even families waiting for resettlement overseas. The success of the report led to the creation and distribution of related public education materials, including the pamphlet *Refugees from Africa: Are we being fair?*.

Akin and his mom were featured in the CCR's report on children in detention.



The CCR highlighted the plight of Eline's children in pressing governments to respond quickly to reunite families following the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti.

Highlights of Activities 2009 - 2010

- > **Fairness in decision-making:** The CCR highlighted serious problems in decision-making at Canada's overseas visa posts. The report *Concerns with refugee decision-making at Cairo* focuses on decisions at one particular visa office, but the CCR believes the problems there reflect systemic shortcomings. The report provides an analysis of 17 cases, all Eritrean refugee applicants rejected at Canada's visa office in Cairo since September 2009. The CCR has since received information about further rejected cases showing similar problems. They include Iraqi and Zimbabwean applicants. Many of the rejected applicants have been recognized as refugees by the UN Refugee Agency. The CCR continues to press the government to take the necessary actions to address the concerns.
- > **Reforming the refugee protection system:** The CCR was fully occupied in the spring of 2010 responding to the government's legislation reforming Canada's refugee protection system (Bill C-11). The CCR played a key role in informing its members, Parliamentarians and the public about the bill. The final version of the bill, which was approved in June 2010, was significantly better for refugees than the original.
- > **Transportation loans for refugees:** The impacts of transportation loans for refugees are a major concern in many Canadian cities. It's terrific to see that a wide range of groups, including the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, have publicly called on the government to absorb the costs of these loans. Making an easier transition possible for refugees in their new communities makes community life better and more affordable for everyone in the long term.



Building Welcoming Communities and Solidarity and Protection: Our Obligations at Home and Abroad were the themes of the Windsor and Ottawa Consultations.

> **Youth Network:** The CCR Youth Network has grown and expanded in the last year. The CCR has hired a dedicated Youth Coordinator and together we are producing more youth-related resources. We have created an online space to encourage idea-sharing.

> **CCR Consultations:** The CCR held two successful and well-attended national consultations, in Windsor (fall 2009) and Ottawa (spring 2010). Participants were able to learn from each other in a common effort to protect and resettle refugees and support the effective integration of newcomers in Canada.

> **Resources from the CCR:** To help inform and educate the public about the realities of refugees and immigrants, and the contributions they make to Canadian society, the CCR produced and distributed numerous resources, available in print, on the internet and even increasingly in video format!

> **National Forum on Trafficking:** The CCR organized a national forum on trafficking in December 2009, bringing together persons who have experienced trafficking, NGOs and government officials, to discuss how best to respond to trafficked persons in Canada.



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The CCR is helping to improve services and protection for non-citizens in Canada who have been trafficked.

Over the past year, the CCR continued to play an important role in informing refugee and immigrant serving NGOs across Canada about new developments. The vital listserv, ccrlist, has over 900 subscribers and is always a lively forum!

**From Jacqueline Rumié,
Fundraising Committee Chair**

Are you a Friend of the CCR?

Did you know the CCR receives no core funding from government? Instead the CCR relies on the support of those who believe in the Council's mandate and mission. About 40 % of all CCR revenue comes from private donations.

We would like to thank all those who support the Council, including the more than 150 Friends of the CCR who currently donate monthly to the organization.

- > To continue our mandate we need everyone's support, including present and future donors, to:
- > Advocate for the rights of refugees and immigrants through government and media relations, research and public education.
- > Offer opportunities for networking and professional development through conferences, working groups and meetings.
- > Strengthen the defence of refugee rights.
- > Advance policy analysis, create publications and fortify information-exchange on refugee and related issues.

So please join your colleagues and become a Friend of the CCR. You can give \$10, \$15, \$20 or any amount you prefer. The important thing is that we all participate in the support of the CCR, to guarantee there continues to be a voice protecting refugees around the world.

To donate or to become a Friend of the CCR please visit our website at:

ccrweb.ca/en/donate

The Canadian Council for Refugees is a non-profit charitable organization. Business number: 11883 0470RR 0001. Donations are tax-deductible.

Audited Financial Report for Year Ended August 31, 2010	2010	2009
	\$	\$
Revenues		
Grants		
Government	161,687	128,323
Others	7,100	8,010
Donations	180,856	162,852
Events -fundraising	150	32,357
Conference registrations	53,477	72,815
Membership fees	62,880	57,198
Publications	808	1,943
Interest	2,488	3,618
	469,446	467,116
Expenses		
Salaries	209,421	190,029
Conference expenses	110,092	91,345
Executive committee	12,785	13,918
Working groups expenses	18,257	28,079
Networking and public education	65,416	50,968
Administrative expenses	54,164	44,686
Fundraising	25,822	43,870
	495,957	462,895
(Deficit) Excess of revenue over expenses	-26,511	4,221
Balance Sheet as at August 31, 2010		
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash	6,023	13,701
Investments maturing in the coming year	83,087	88,341
Accounts receivable	54,535	53,393
Prepaid expenses	587	3,222
	144,232	158,657
Investments	50,000	40,000
	194,232	198,657
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable	27,257	15,302
Deferred contributions	63,028	52,897
	90,285	68,199
Net Assets		
Restricted to income stabilization fund	20,000	20,000
Unrestricted	83,947	110,458
	103,947	130,458
	194,232	198,657

The above is a summary. Copies of full audited statements, including notes, are available from the CCR office.

CANADIAN COUNCIL FOR REFUGEES

6839A Drolet #302, Montréal QC, H2S 2T1

tel. (514) 277-7223, fax (514) 277-1447

email: info@ccrweb.ca website: www.ccrweb.ca

