

# Canadian Council for Refugees



## Annual Report 2005-2006

### 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 (2005-2006)

**President:** Elizabeth McWeeny, Thunder Bay

**Past President:** Nick Summers, St. John's

**Vice-President:** Amy Casipullai, Toronto

**Treasurer:** Ibrahim Absiye, Toronto

**Secretary:** John Docherty, Montréal

#### Counsellors:

Jehad Aliweiwi, Toronto

Julie Bédard-Mathieu, Montréal

Tigist Dafla, Edmonton

Gilbert Iyamuremye, Windsor

Michele Millard, Toronto

Eva Osorio-Nieto, Halifax

Victor Porter, Vancouver

Wanda Yamamoto, Winnipeg

### Staff

Janet Dench, Executive Director  
Guadalupe Macias / Alec Valodine, Office Manager  
Roberto Jovel / Meissoun Azzaria, Settlement Policy Director

Catherine Balfour / Colleen French, Communication and Networking Coordinator  
Karima Akli / Alejandra Morales, Office Assistant

### Canadian Council for Refugees

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### Message from the President, Elizabeth McWeeny

The CCR Mission Statement says that we are committed to the rights and protection of refugees in Canada and around the world and to the settlement of refugees and immigrants in Canada. This year the CCR members have been challenged on all fronts to live this mission – and we have responded by strengthening our efforts and broadening our strategies.



Youth participants at the International Refugee Rights Conference, June 2006.  
Credit: Taro Hashimoto

One important way to meet the challenges facing refugees is to look to the international arena. The CCR realized that refugee advocates need to work together across borders, rather than each working in our separate arena. In order to make this dream a reality, we took the ambitious step of inviting NGOs from around the world to the International Refugee Rights Conference, which was very successfully held in June in Toronto. Several generous donations and grants made attendance possible for representatives of small NGOs from various regions of the world. At the concluding plenary participants warmly endorsed the CCR's major recommendation to establish an international network on refugee rights. Since June, the CCR has been working with others to convene a steering committee to oversee the development of the network which we hope will one day become an essential player in a more just world for refugees.

The June conference also provided an exciting launch for the emerging CCR Youth network. We are becoming increasingly aware of the leadership role that young people are able to bring to the CCR. They help us to deepen our understanding of the issues facing newcomer youth. They are also taking forward the struggle for refugee rights in new ways and to different parts of society. We look forward to the youth network growing increasingly active over the coming year, starting with a youth-focused consultation this fall.

Meanwhile, the realities facing refugees and immigrants have made many calls on our attention over the past year. The overall number of persons arriving through Canada's humanitarian programs

is dropping due to interdiction measures such as the Safe Third Country Agreement. On the other hand, the numbers of refugees resettled remains low (despite the willingness of private groups to sponsor much larger numbers of refugees).

Much of the work undertaken by CCR is supported by volunteers and I'd like to give particular recognition and appreciation to the Legal

Affairs Committee and the lawyers who undertake cases on behalf of CCR or with CCR support in order to achieve justice for refugees and immigrants. The amount of work put in by these skilled experts is amazing and often successful. We thank them all.

Four members of our Board are ending their terms this month and I take this opportunity to thank them for their energy and commitment to the CCR. All of us have busy lives and 'real' jobs and serving as a CCR Board member requires a lot of late nights and weekends. I certainly look forward to their continued involvement with the work of CCR – we need them all.

Our dedicated staff has given their all again this year. This small team headed by Janet brought us through the International Conference, produces incredible amounts of written work, speaks on our behalf and supports the Executive and Working Groups to get things done. With regret, we lost some valuable staff persons this year but gained new energy and skills in welcoming new staff members to the team and I look forward to working with them again this year.

As we enter a new year I hope we can keep our commitment to rights and justice for refugees as the focus for our work and strive to put the 'human' back into humanitarian.

Thank you all,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth McWeeny', is written in the bottom right corner of the page.

## Mandate

### The Canadian Council for Refugees fulfils its mission by:

- Providing opportunities for networking and professional development through consultations, working groups, publications and meetings;
- Working in cooperation with other networks to strengthen the defense of refugee rights;
- Advancing policy analysis and information-exchange on refugee and related issues;
- Advocating for the rights of refugees and immigrants through media relations, government relations, research and public education.

### The mandate of the CCR is rooted in the belief that:

- Everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 14.1);
- Refugees, refugee claimants, displaced persons and immigrants have the right to a dignified life and the rights and protections laid out in national and international agreements and conventions concerning human rights;
- Canada and Canadians have responsibilities for the protection and resettlement of refugees from around the world;
- Settlement services to refugees and immigrants are fundamental to participation in Canadian life;
- National and international refugee and immigration policies must accord special consideration to the experience of refugee and immigrant women and children and to the effect of racism.

### The CCR's organizational principles are:

- The membership of the Canadian Council for Refugees reflects the diversity of those concerned with refugee and settlement issues and includes refugees and other interested people in all regions of Canada;
- The work of the Council is democratic and collaborative;
- Our work is national and international in scope.

## 2005 - 2006 Highlights

### INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING ON REFUGEE RIGHTS

In order to increase our effectiveness in achieving rights for refugees, the CCR has invested heavily in promoting cross-border networking among refugee advocates. Our very successful June 2006 International Refugee Rights Conference brought together NGOs from a wide variety of countries, including Malaysia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Colombia, Australia, Iran, South Africa and Bulgaria, to name just a few. The conference expressed overwhelming support for the development of an international network, which is now a CCR priority.

### LIVES ON HOLD

As part of broad calls for the regularization of people without status, the CCR has been actively supporting efforts by nationals of moratorium countries to win permanent residence. In May a delegation of people in limbo travelled to Ottawa to explain their situation to parliamentarians and ask for a solution. Following suggestions by the Minister and others that people in limbo can always ask for humanitarian consideration, the CCR participated in an analysis of negative humanitarian decisions, to demonstrate the need for a more comprehensive solution.

### PROFESSIONALIZATION TASK FORCE

In course of the year, the CCR pursued the development of the project focusing on the professionalization of the settlement sector. Other organizations have signed on to support this effort to achieve better recognition of the contribution of settlement workers.

### PRIVATE SPONSORSHIP OF REFUGEES

The CCR continued to collaborate with and support the work of the elected representatives of the Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAHs) in seeking to respond to the many challenges facing the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program. Chief among these are the huge backlog of undertakings overseas leading to unbearably long delays and the low acceptance rates. The CCR highlighted these concerns and proposed some solutions in our first meeting with Minister Solberg.

### GENDER-BASED APPROACH TO SETTLEMENT

Through a specific project involving research and regional consultations, the CCR explored the application of a gender-based analysis to settlement work. A toolkit is being developed and will be ready in November.

### US-CANADA SAFE THIRD COUNTRY AGREEMENT

On the first anniversary of the implementation of the Safe Third Country Agreement, the Canadian Council for Refugees launched a legal challenge, along with Amnesty International, the Canadian Council of Churches and a Colombian asylum seeker in the US. We are arguing that the US is not a safe country for all refugees, and that by denying asylum seekers the right to make a claim at the US-Canada border, Canada is violating its international obligations to protect refugees from refoulement and denying them their rights under the Charter. The Federal Court has granted leave; the hearing is expected to take place in February 2007. The CCR also published a report on the first year of implementation, highlighting the devastating consequences for refugees.

### SECURITY ISSUES

The predominance of the security agenda continued to be a major concern. The CCR participated actively in an intervention before the Supreme Court of Canada in the security certificate cases heard in June (the decision is pending). The CCR also provided comments to the Immigration and Refugee Board on their draft policy on the use of "secret hearings". A longstanding problem of long security-related delays in refugees' permanent residence applications was highlighted by the lawsuit launched by Suleyman Goven, with the support of the CCR. Recently Mr Goven became a permanent residence, thirteen years after he applied!

### TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

We continued to work to raise awareness of the realities of trafficking in Canada and to advocate for protection for trafficked persons. An important step was taken in May 2006, when the government issued guidelines for Temporary Residence Permits for trafficked persons.

## 2005 - 2006 Highlights (continued)

### INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTIONS ADVOCATING FOR REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

Canada was examined by the UN on its compliance with the Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The CCR made submissions on both of these, highlighting areas where Canada does not live up to its international human rights obligations. The CCR also participated at a hearing in October 2005 before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, on the complaint we made against Canada for its use of "direct backs" to return asylum seekers to the US without consideration of their need for protection.

The CCR was active through the year in addressing a wide range of other issues affecting refugees and immigrants, bringing them to the attention of government, Parliament, the courts and the public. There have been successes (for example, the government adopted a new policy to end enforcement action in schools); other campaigns are ongoing (for example, for the right of appeal for refugees). Over the past year, the CCR has developed issue specific web pages to highlight information and calls for action (for example, [www.reunification.ca](http://www.reunification.ca)).

## CCR in Print 2005 - 2006

### CCR PUBLICATIONS

- International Refugee Rights Conference: Report of the conference sessions, September 2006, report
- International Refugee Rights Conference: International networking report from the concluding plenary, September 2006, report
- Lives on Hold – The Limits of H&C, September 2006, report
- Lives on Hold – Vies en suspens, May 2006, DVD
- The Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program: Current challenges and opportunities, April 2006, report
- Non-Citizens in Canada: Equally human, equally entitled to rights, March 2006, report and background
- Closing the Front Door on Refugees: Report on the first year of the Safe Third Country Agreement, December 2005, report
- Annual Status Report on Canada's Refugee and Immigration Policies, November 2005, factsheet and appendix
- Family Separation: Who pays the cost?, October 2005, factsheet
- Refugees and Non-Citizens in Canada: Key concerns regarding Canada's compliance with the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), September 2005, report
- Anti-Terrorism Act Review, Brief to the House of Common Subcommittee on Public Safety and National Security, September 2005, report

### CCR WEBSITE

Visit the CCR website ([www.web.ca/ccr](http://www.web.ca/ccr)) for these and many other documents.

### CCR NEWS RELEASES (selected)

- Government Appointment Failures Hurt Refugees, 21 September 2006
- No Refugee Appeal Means No Government Accountability, 28 June 2006
- International Detention Coalition Launch Marks World Refugee Day, 20 June 2006
- CCR Welcomes Emergency Protection Measure for Trafficked Persons, 11 May 2006
- Call for Solution for Nationals of Moratoria Countries Living in Limbo, 9 May 2006
- Safe Third Country Agreement Shown to Violate Refugee Rights, 29 March 2006
- CCR Criticizes Canada's Treatment of Non-Citizens in Report to United Nations Committee, 21 March 2006
- Groups Launch Legal Challenge of Safe Third Country Agreement, 29 December 2005
- CCR Denounces Unfair Security Inadmissibility Provisions, 8 November 2005
- Rights Groups Remind Government of Broken Promises on Refugee Appeal, 14 October 2005

### CCR CHRONICLE

Sign up for the CCR Chronicle, a monthly electronic digest keeping you up-to-date on refugee and immigrant rights advocacy in Canada. To subscribe, send an email with the subject 'subscribe Chronicle' to [ccr4@web.ca](mailto:ccr4@web.ca)

### CCR LISTSERVE

Stay in touch with the CCR through our online activist network. To subscribe, send your name, organization and email address to [ccr3@web.ca](mailto:ccr3@web.ca)

## Working Groups and Core Groups

The working groups are the forum in which CCR members exchange information, network and develop strategies and policy positions in particular areas of concern. They are responsible for preparing resolutions and planning workshops at the consultations, as well as for advising the Executive on policy. Working groups meet four times a year.

### Working Group on Immigration & Settlement

This working group examines issues relating to immigration and to refugee and immigrant settlement in Canada. The settlement core group is made up of representatives of provincial, regional and national organizations. Co-chairs: Debbie Douglas & Sherman Chan.

### Working Group on Inland Protection

This working group is concerned for the protection of refugee claimants in Canada or seeking to come to Canada. Co-chairs: Deborah Isaacs & Francisco Rico-Martinez.

### Working Group on Overseas Protection & Sponsorship

This working group looks at issues relating to the selection of refugees from overseas and the programs for them here in Canada, as well as protection issues for refugees around the world. Co-chairs: Paulette Johnson & Solomon Olu-Cole.

### Core Groups

Core groups ensure that certain issues receive a high profile within working groups and the CCR as a whole. They are made up of representatives of the three working groups. Loly Rico & Tigest Daffa chaired the Core Group on Gender Issues; Gideon Kpotsi chaired the Anti-Racism Core Group, and Jehad Aliweiwi & Jennifer Jeanes chaired the Communications Core Group.

*Did you know...?* **THE CCR YOUTH NETWORK** was launched in June 2006 and has set up an online discussion group at: <http://groups.takingitglobal.org/jeunesccr>

## Report on Fundraising from Jihad Aliweiwi, CCR Executive Member

The CCR is an established agency with a respected role in refugee protection in Canada. Our organization's track record of excellence is resulting in an increased demand on our support and advocacy work on behalf of refugees and the refugee and immigrants serving agencies across the country.

The CCR plays a critically important role in responding to emerging needs in refugee protection, negative perceptions of refugees and changing political realities in Ottawa.

We warmly thank Friends of the CCR, donors and regular supporters for contributing to this work.

For CCR to continue to be an effective voice, we must address fiscal challenges and resource limitations facing the organization today. We need to be able to ensure sustainability and viability.

To meet this challenge, the CCR is in the process of developing a comprehensive long term financial and resource development plan. The goal is to build a plan that will ensure sustainable core funding, diversified and stable program funding sources, and an expanded donor base.

For the plan to succeed, CCR needs the creative contribution of all its members and supporters.

The goal is to raise one million dollars by the end of 2012.

## How you can stand up for human rights for refugees

- Welcome refugees to your community
- Promote positive attitudes towards refugees and other newcomers among your friends and neighbours
- Encourage your organization to join the Canadian Council for Refugees
- Join the CCR as an associate member if you are not part of an organization
- Volunteer at our national headquarters or with a member group in your community
- Attend the CCR consultations
- Make a charitable donation (you will receive a receipt for tax purposes)

The Canadian Council for Refugees is a non-profit charitable organization.  
Business number: 11 883 0470RR 0001.  
Donations are tax-deductible.

# Canadian Council for Refugees

## Statement of operations year ended August 31, 2006

Revenue	2006	2005
	\$	\$
Donations	70,186	75,274
Grants		
Government	148,841	61,252
Others	69,767	62,651
Events	2,088	3,112
Conference registrations	63,680	42,650
Membership fees	42,070	48,435
Publications	702	727
Interest	1,504	2,120
	<b>398,838</b>	296,221
<b>Expenses</b>		
Staffing expenses	221,510	211,145
Administration expenses	34,602	35,364
Conference expenses	81,832	20,616
Executive Committee	22,793	28,799
Working Group expenses	30,185	8,724
Fundraising	2,392	1,441
	<b>393,314</b>	306,089
<b>Excess of revenues over expenses</b>	<b>5,524</b>	(9,868)
<b>Balance Sheet as at August 31, 2006</b>		

	2006	2005
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash	300	34,732
Term deposit (note 3)	36,238	62,227
Accounts receivable (note 4)	61,407	8,924
Prepaid expenses	1,488	2,617
	<b>99,433</b>	108,500
Investments (note 3)	10,200	20,368
	<b>109,633</b>	128,868
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Excess of outstanding cheques over cash	12,167	-
Accounts payable (note 6)	4,635	4,256
Deferred contributions (note 7)	8,162	45,467
	<b>24,964</b>	49,723
<b>Assets</b>		
Restricted for stabilization fund	10,000	10,000
Unrestricted	74,669	69,145
	<b>84,669</b>	79,145
	<b>109,633</b>	128,868

Copies of audited statements, including notes which are an integral part of the financial statements, are available from the CCR office.