



Canadian Friends Service Committee E-Newsletter

August, 2014

CFSC writes to officials over crisis in Gaza

"All bloody principles and practices we do utterly deny, with all outward wars, and strife, and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretence whatsoever, and this is our testimony to the whole world..."

So reads the famous testimony of Friends to Charles II in 1660. While contexts and conflicts change, Friends' conviction that violence is unacceptable and contrary to the will of God is ongoing.

In a letter expressing our concern regarding the situation in Israel and Palestine, Lesley Robertson, Clerk of Canadian Friends Service Committee, states,

"We are moved by the sufferings of the Palestinian and Israeli peoples. This suffering has gone on too long and must not be allowed to continue. We know that both Israelis and Palestinians have committed acts of violence against each other. We are also aware of the huge inequality of power between them.

"As a people of faith, we challenge all people, and particularly people of faith, not to put their trust in tanks or bombs or military aggression, but to open themselves to the Spirit of Love which counsels a path of nonviolence. Such a path recognizes the dignity of all peoples and seeks solutions to international conflicts through just and peaceful means."

We lament the loss of all lives in Israel and Palestine, and hold all in the Light during this tragic time. Read the full letter at: <http://bit.ly/1odRBqW>.

In such profoundly troubling situations Quakers often want to help provide humanitarian relief. The most effective and sensible approach is to support groups that are already on the ground in the region and working in ways consistent with Friends' beliefs. As CFSC's partners are in the West Bank and do not do humanitarian aid work, we recommend donating through Mennonite Central Committee Canada (<http://mcccanada.ca/>; 1-888-622-6337) or Doctors without Borders (<http://www.msf.ca/>; 1-800-982-7903)

For news from the region visit the CFSC-funded International Middle East Media Centre (based in the West Bank, not Gaza): <http://www.imemc.org>



Health workers assisting one of the thousands of people injured in Gaza. *Credit: Syeda Amina Trust CC-BY.*

Canadian faith leaders condemn threats to minorities in northern Iraq

CFSC and Canadian Yearly Meeting joined with other faith leaders in a statement outlining their concern for religious minorities in Mosul, Iraq, in particular the persecution of Christians.

CFSC's Care to Care maternal and child health project (which completed in 2012) offered training to medical professionals in Erbil, less than 100 kilometers from Mosul in Iraqi Kurdistan. We think of our partners and of all in the region, praying for an end to violence and respect for the human rights of all. Read the statement at: <http://bit.ly/1sgAV3W>

Summit on Climate Change – upcoming events

As the effects of climate change become increasingly severe and the need for urgent response mounts, Quaker Earthcare Witness will be among those represented at the People's Climate March. The march is expected to be the biggest climate rally in history, set to coincide with a UN summit on climate change happening in New York City on September 21st. More about the NYC march at: <http://peoplesclimate.org/march/>

The World Council of Churches and Religions for Peace will organize an Interfaith Summit on Climate Change, in New York on September 21-22. Union Theological Seminary will hold the Religions for the Earth Conference on September 19-21 (<http://bit.ly/1sjfgsl>). In addition, the Canadian Council of Churches is encouraging action among its members, such as joining people of faith around the world in dedicating the first day of each month to fasting and praying in solidarity for climate justice. Their Facebook page is: <https://www.facebook.com/climatefaith>. Post your own participation on Twitter with [#fastfortheclimate](https://twitter.com/fastfortheclimate).

Can't make it to New York? More than 15,000 Canadians have already signed up to take part in simultaneous local marches through Avaaz (https://secure.avaaz.org/en/join_to_change_everything_rb/)

Bail and the Revolving Door of Pre-trial Detention

CFSC's Quakers Fostering Justice program committee would like to share with you the Canadian Civil Liberties Association's new report, *Set Up to Fail: Bail and the Revolving Door of Pre-trial Detention*. The report questions the extensive rise in pre-trial custody populations and identifies the extreme personal and financial costs of current practices in Canadian bail courts.

Read it at: <http://ccla.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Set-up-to-fail-FINAL.pdf>

Inclusive leadership training in BC

Friday, August 22 to Monday, August 25 will be a gathering and training for all those interested in developing inclusive leadership awareness, skills and action plans for embracing diversity (participants may come for 1, 2, 3, or all 4 days). Training takes place at O.U.R. Ecovillage, near Shawnigan Lake, Vancouver Island, BC, and costs \$100 plus meals and accommodation (i.e., 4 days including tuition, camping and meals is \$300.00). More information: <http://inclusiveleadershipco-op.org/august-gathering/>



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