



Canadian Friends Service Committee E-Newsletter

July, 2015

Truth and Reconciliation

CFSC participated in the closing events of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada from March 31st to June 3rd. CFSC was involved in planning, speaking on and facilitating discussion panels. On June 1st, along with partners, CFSC held a panel on *Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery*. Later that day, CFSC was involved in a panel on the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* which over 900 people attended and which was watched live online by more than 50,000. CFSC staff and associates, along with members of Ottawa Monthly Meeting, attended multiple events such as the Walk for Reconciliation, a Sunrise Ceremony on Victoria Island and the release of the official report from the TRC.



CFSC staff Jennifer Preston and Rachel Singleton-Polster take part in the Walk for Reconciliation.
Photo credit: Ellen Gabriel

To view more about CFSC's involvement at the TRC closing events and videos of our panel discussions visit: <http://quakerservice.ca/our-work/indigenous-peoples-rights/canada-based-work/>

CFSC federal election resource kit

Canadians will go to the polls for a federal election in October. Canadian Friends hold a broad range of concerns, so we've put together a set of election resources – brief background information and questions you may want to ask of candidates seeking election. The election resources kit includes links to questions from other organizations we share common concerns with and tips about regulations governing registered charities.

To view the kit, visit: <http://quakerservice.ca/news/election-resources/>

Canada can do more to prevent torture

Back in December, CFSC joined with others calling on Canada to do its part to prevent torture. Unfortunately the Government of Canada has still failed to ratify the *Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture*. Canada can do more to identify and remedy the conditions that encourage and allow torture to happen in detention centers all around the world. It's high time that Canada get serious about working to stop torture. You can find a petition calling on Canada to ratify the *Optional Protocol* at <http://e-activist.com/ea-action/action?ea.client.id=1770&ea.campaign.id=31053>

Read the joint letter CFSC signed at: <http://quakerservice.ca/PreventTorture>

High levels of mercury continue in Grassy Narrows

A newly released government commissioned report has found that mercury levels in the Wabigoon River near Grassy Narrows are nearly 20 times higher than natural. Grassy Narrows is the infamous site of one of Canada's worst environmental health disasters in which 9,000 kg of mercury was dumped into the water in the 1960s. Friends have a long history of supporting Grassy Narrows in seeking justice. The new report notes that mercury levels in surrounding lakes and rivers have begun to rise.

For more information on Grassy Narrows and the recent report, visit: <http://bit.ly/1BUzxtR>

Dismantling Democracy

Voices-Voix has released a new 62 page report, *Dismantling Democracy: Stifling Debate and Dissent in Canada*, which details many serious concerns with the deteriorating state of Canada's democracy. CFSC is a founding endorser of the Voices-Voix coalition. Read the report at: <http://bit.ly/1H6EPD1>

A welcome pause for War Resisters

Friends welcomed the news that, due to legal proceedings, a number of court dates originally scheduled for this summer for American conscientious objectors to the Iraq war who are seeking to stay in Canada, have been delayed until the fall. This pause will allow additional time to prepare for the cases and for Friends and others to increase dialogue with government leaders. CFSC issued an urgent action call last fall and, alongside the War Resisters Support Campaign, we continue to urge Friends to contact government representatives to share their support for the right to conscientious objection. Find more background at: <http://www.quakerservice.ca/CO> and in our Federal Election Resource Kit: <http://quakerservice.ca/news/election-resources/>

KAIROS Releases 2014 Annual Report



KAIROS released its 2014 annual report last month. The Report shines a spotlight on its partners and supporters and their efforts to build a more socially and ecologically just world. Five years since losing government funding, the report is significant to resilience and perseverance of the people and causes of KAIROS. Canadian Yearly meeting is a member of KAIROS and as such, CFSC offers congratulation on the release of their report. To view the full report, visit: <http://bit.ly/1Rplkao>



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