



Canadian Friends Service Committee E-Newsletter

May, 2016

Churches issue joint statement on UN Declaration and reconciliation



March for Reconciliation, Ottawa, June 2015. Photo credit: Rachel Singleton-Polster

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) has joined with seven Christian churches in issuing a joint statement committing to use the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as a framework for reconciliation. The churches note,

"The *UN Declaration*, with its emphasis on self-determination and consent, freedom from discrimination, and rights to spirituality, culture, lands, and resources, helps us to address the root causes of... inequity, and provides the means for us to correct it."

Friends have also issued their own statement specifically about our work on the journey of reconciliation. You can find links to both statements at <http://quakerservice.ca/TRC48>
Read a guide to help Quakers and others engage in the process of reconciliation at <http://quakerservice.ca/TRCGuide>

Private members bill on the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*

A private members bill requiring Canadian laws to be "in harmony" with the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* was introduced in Parliament in late April. CFSC has worked for years towards the meaningful implementation of the *UN Declaration* in Canada. We encourage Friends to reach out to their MPs to garner support for Canada's full implementation of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, something the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada called for in its *Calls to Action*, all 94 of which the government of Canada has publicly committed to implementing.

Learn more about the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* at <http://quakerservice.ca/UNDeclaration>

Seeking long term solutions for Palestinian refugees

CFSC wrote an open letter to PM Justin Trudeau regarding the plight of Palestinian refugees, particularly the lack of funding to support these refugees. The UN Relief and Works Agency is not a long term solution to this deep rooted problem, so CFSC has asked for resumed funding of the Agency as well as a more serious consideration from the Canadian government about how to address the situation faced by Palestinian refugees.

Read the letter at <http://quakerservice.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/201604-Letter-on-Palestinian-refugees.pdf>

Partnerships and action for justice

CFSC partners with the Church Council on Justice and Corrections (CCJC), which is developing and piloting programs in prisons and the community that promote empathy through an examination of victim impact. To find out more information, you can watch a presentation organized by the Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime in March 2016: <http://crcvc.ca/2016/04/02/event-videos/>

CFSC sent a request to the new Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness to consider reappointing Howard Sapers as Correctional Investigator for Canada for another full term. The Correctional Investigator acts as an ombudsman for people incarcerated in federal prisons and there was uncertainty around whether this position would be filled or renewed. Among the many significant contributions of the Correctional Investigator were important recommendations made following the tragic death of Ashley Smith. These recommendations are yet to be implemented and CFSC will continue to work with our partners to promote this. We are pleased to share that on March 31, 2016, Minister Goodale reappointed the Correctional Investigator for a one-year term. <http://www.oci-bec.gc.ca/index-eng.aspx>

Have you seen what we've been up to lately?

Our newest issue of *Quaker Concern* is out, which addresses issues like effective ways to help sex offenders reintegrate into society, what a foreign policy based on peacebuilding might look like, and intergenerational trauma and resilience among Indigenous Peoples. If you are not subscribed, join our low traffic (three emails per year) *Quaker Concern* email list to receive this 8 page CFSC newsletter: <http://www.quakerservice.ca/QC>. You can also contact us to be added to our print mailing list (donors get print copies of *Quaker Concern* for free!)

We continue to update our Facebook (<http://www.quakerservice.ca/Facebook>) and Twitter (<http://www.quakerservice.ca/Twitter>) accounts with informative news items and ways to take action every day. We also regularly add new content to our website, so if you haven't seen it lately, have a look: <http://www.quakerservice.ca>



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