



## Canadian Friends Service Committee E-Newsletter

May, 2017



### **Syria: Imagine another way**

As we watch news of the atrocities happening in Syria many of us are led to ask: *"What could have been done to prevent this?"*

A new brief animated video with narration by CFSC Program Coordinator Matt Legge explores this question.

The video, developed by the Canadian Peace Initiative and CFSC, doesn't propose to have final answers, but does raise new and promising possibilities. We hope this video will encourage fresh thinking and conversations. Please share it widely and consider using it as the start of a group discussion: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6VlrGt72a2g&feature=youtu.be>

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### **Joint statements from the UN**

CFSC staff Jennifer Preston and member Rachel Singleton-Polster are at the United Nations currently for the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. We have worked with Indigenous Peoples' organizations and human rights groups to issue two joint statements:

Implementation of the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*:  
<http://quakerservice.ca/UNPFII2017-1>

Sustainable development: <http://quakerservice.ca/UNPFII2017-2>

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## CFSC writes in support of Hassan Diab

We have written to Canada's Minister of Justice due to our concern with the situation of Canadian academic Hassan Diab. Hassan was extradited from Canada to France in November 2014. The extradition judge described the evidence against Hassan as "very problematic". However, the judge said the low threshold under Canada's extradition law left him no alternative and he had to commit Hassan to extradition.

In France, judges have ordered Hassan's release six times due to the lack of a meaningful case against him and "consistent evidence" that Hassan Diab was not even in France at the time of the 1980 bombing he is accused of. Yet these orders have been overturned and Hassan is still incarcerated. Our letter is posted at <http://quakerservice.ca/HassanDiab>

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## Pilgrimage for Indigenous Rights

A 600 km walk is well underway from Kitchener to Ottawa, engaging churches in a series of conversations about the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, exploring why it matters, the hope it offers, and how we can collectively live into it. Walkers are a diverse group, many from different Christian faith backgrounds, including Quaker.

"We recognize that much more work needs to be done, particularly as it concerns the ways that Settler worldviews and practices have been impacted by colonialism, both past and present. We have studied our own faith traditions and come to the conclusion that our beliefs and values compel us to seek justice so that Settlers and Indigenous peoples may live in peaceful and right relationships. When we seek healing for others, we ourselves will be healed." <http://pfir.ca/>

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## Free Issa

Many members of CFSC have visited Hebron in the Occupied West Bank, and have been deeply troubled by the horrible conditions there, documented and brought to light by civil society groups including Youth Against Settlements (YAS). We have been inspired by the nonviolent work of YAS and its founder Issa Amro.

Issa now faces major jail time. We are concerned that the charges brought against him, dating back to 2010, are attempts to repress legitimate dissent and nonviolent struggle for human rights and equality. Issa is an internationally renowned human rights defender, and is principled in his philosophical and practical commitment to active nonviolence as the route to peace. Learn more: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/27/opinion/whos-afraid-of-nonviolence.html> and consider supporting Issa at: <http://Freelssa.org>

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