



Collective Strength: Commissions to Communities and Back

Goal: CASHRA 2008 will address ways in which Commissions and Communities can work together to develop a strong human rights culture in Canada. By identifying common goals and methods for cooperative exchange and action, the conference aims to lay a foundation for a more collaborative and interdependent approach to human rights.

Day 1 – Sunday June 15, 2008

2:00-6:00pm	Optional Excursion to Niagara on the Lake <i>Set by Niagara River and Lake Ontario, participants may enjoy a guided tour of historic Niagara on the Lake</i>	Optional Excursion to Niagara Falls <i>Participants will experience the indelible mark nature has left on the Niagara region through a guided tour of the Horseshoe Falls and view of the Dufferin Islands</i>
7:00-9:00pm	Welcome Reception <i>Refreshments will be provided</i>	



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Day 2 – Monday June 16, 2008

7:30-8:45am	Breakfast <i>Continental Breakfast will be available at Niagara College</i>			
9:00-9:25am	(1) Plenary Introduction			
Objective I: Examining current Commission activities and how they engage Communities				
9:30-10:30am	(2a) Concurrent Expanding grounds of protection enumerated in Human Rights Codes	(2b) Concurrent Systemic change and building human rights cultures	(2c) Concurrent Commission and Aboriginal Community Engagement	(2d) Concurrent National Security and Human Rights
	<i>International human rights bodies criticize Canada over discrimination in areas not protected by existing human rights legislation. This session explores current efforts to expand enumerated grounds and rights protections in areas such as political affiliation, gender identity, and social condition, providing a suitable background to explore Commission efforts in engaging Communities.</i>	<i>This session explores current initiatives by Commissions to foster human rights systemic change and human rights culture either directly or in partnership with organizations and Communities. This discussion will focus efforts for systemic change efforts in policing and will explore Commission efforts to engage Communities in these change efforts.</i>	<i>This session explores whether Commissions are effectively engaging and serving Aboriginal communities. It will review what efforts have been made to provide Commission services to Aboriginal Communities. Aboriginal spokes persons will comment and provide guidance on opportunities to improve service and engagement.</i>	<i>This session explores initiatives by Commissions and Communities to work together to address the tension between an expanding national security agenda and respect for human rights. The discussion will focus on the powers of Canadian security and intelligence agencies and their monitoring bodies, an assessment of the Smart Border agreement, and an analysis of profiling as a tool for delivering security.</i>



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10:30-10:45am	Break			
10:45-11:15am	(3) Plenary Review of objective I <i>Concurrent sessions are briefly reviewed and a guest presenter directly speaks to the objective.</i>			
11:15-12:00	(4) Plenary Celebratory Launch of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 60th Anniversary Initiative <i>In celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies (CASHRA) in conjunction with TakingITGlobal and the John Humphrey Centre will officially launch a web-based Youth Engagement Initiative.</i>			
12:00-1:00pm	Lunch			
Objective II: Exploring Community methods to promote human rights and how they engage Human Rights Commissions in this work				
1:10-2:10pm	(5a) Concurrent Mental health and Human Rights <i>This session explores efforts to advance the state of human rights of individuals with mental health disabilities by focusing on Community group advocacy initiatives. It focuses on obstacles</i>	(5b) Concurrent Efforts to build inclusive schools <i>This session explores efforts by a broad spectrum of Communities to foster more inclusive schools. Elements of education discussed will include teacher training focused on human right, hidden and</i>	(5c) Concurrent Human rights for Aboriginals: Is repealing Section 67 of the Canadian Human Rights Act the solution? <i>Section 67 of the Canadian Human Rights Act restricts the ability of First Nations people living on reserve to file a complaint against</i>	(5d) Concurrent Housing as a Human Right <i>This session explores gaps between international human rights requirements for housing and current Canadian human rights protections by focusing on community efforts to provide immediate</i>



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	<i>such Communities face in employing existing human rights systems and to involve Commissions in responding to this issue.</i>	<i>formal curriculum, and school social environment.</i>	<i>band councils or the federal government. This session explores current efforts to repealing Section 67 and the diverse perspectives on the issue and asks, is repealing Section 67 the solution and if not, then where do we go from here?</i>	<i>solutions and advocate for structural change. It will also explore what role Commissions are or should be playing in advancing housing rights and to support Community efforts.</i>
2:15-2:45pm	<p>(6) Plenary Review of Objective II <i>Concurrent sessions are briefly reviewed and a guest presenter directly speaks to the objective.</i></p>			
2:45-3:00pm	<p>Break</p>			
3:00-3:15pm	<p>(7) Plenary Secretary of Cabinet <i>Last December, the Ontario Public Service launched the framework for its strategic plan on diversity. Through this strategy, the OPS has been - and will continue to - build a stronger, more diverse and inclusive organization at all levels. Hear Ontario's Secretary of the Cabinet, Shelly Jamieson, discuss how the OPS is making progress on its strategy and moving forward aggressively to become a leader in diversity.</i></p>			
3:15-3:25pm	<p>(8) Plenary CHRC Announcement <i>Announcement on Hate Crimes Web Initiative</i></p>			



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3:25-4:30pm	<p style="text-align: center;">(9) Plenary The role of Commissions in addressing Human rights concerns about the media</p> <p><i>This session explores the role of commissions in addressing human rights concerns such as racism in the media. This session also looks at media perspectives about commission activity that are perceived to impinge on freedom of the press.</i></p>
5:30-6:30pm	Evening shuttle to Reception
6:30-7:00pm	Reception
7:00-9:00pm	Celebratory dinner/Guest speaker
9:00-10:00pm	Return shuttle



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Day 3 – Tuesday June 17, 2008

7:30-8:45am	Breakfast			
8:30-8:55am	(10) Plenary Report on Ontario Human Rights System Transition			
Objective III: Examining barriers and best practices in Commission and Community engagement				
9:00-10:00am	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>(11a) Concurrent</i> Are Human rights systems engaging the diverse Communities they should serve?</p> <p><i>This session explores our existing human rights systems and asks whether they fully accommodate the diverse persons they serve. Does the current human rights system in Canada force individuals to adopt alien values to gain entry into the system? How do human rights systems meet the needs of Communities with different worldviews, communication styles, or cultures?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>(11b) Concurrent</i> The issue of media and Commission-Community engagement</p> <p><i>This session explores the impact of media on human rights work in Canada. It will review the various roles of media in this work and identify ways in which Communities and Commissions can work together to positively employ the media to serve and promote human rights. It will focus on identifying positive examples and best practices.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>(11c) Concurrent</i> Barriers to accessing human rights for non-citizens</p> <p><i>This session explores the human rights situation of documented and undocumented non-citizens in Canada. It focuses on barriers faced by these individuals in employing human rights Commissions and other human rights protections.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>(11d) Concurrent</i> The “Reasonable Accommodation” Debate</p> <p><i>This session explores issues confronting human rights Commissions and Communities resulting from the “reasonable accommodation debate” in Quebec and beyond. It will focus on the issue of competing human rights claims and what role Commissions and Communities could or should be playing in the emerging controversy.</i></p>



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10:00-10:15am	Break			
10:15-10:45am	<p>(12) Plenary Review of objective III <i>Concurrent sessions are briefly reviewed and a guest presenter directly speaks to the objective</i></p>			
Objective IV: Developing new strategies to enhance Commission and Community engagement for human rights				
10:55-11:55am	<p>(13a) Concurrent Human rights compliance going forward: exploring Commission and Community roles <i>A facilitated discussion where compliance and enforcement professionals from Commissions and Communities will together discuss latest challenges and solutions affecting their work.</i></p>	<p>(13b) Concurrent Public education and outreach professionals joint strategy session <i>A facilitated discussion where public education and outreach professionals from Commissions and Communities will together discuss latest challenges and solutions affecting their work.</i></p>	<p>(13c) Concurrent Policy development strategy session <i>A facilitated discussion where policy professionals and systemic change advocates from Commissions and Communities will together discuss latest challenges and solutions affecting their work.</i></p>	<p>(13d) Concurrent Legal Updates <i>A facilitated discussion where legal professionals from Commissions and Communities share current case law updates as well as discuss latest challenges and solutions affecting their work.</i></p>
12:00-1:00pm	<p>BBQ lunch event Interactive game: “Who wants to be a Human Rights guru?”</p>			
1:10-2:10pm	<p>(14a) Concurrent What we can learn from Human Rights Systems of the Global South</p>	<p>(14b) Concurrent Strategies for joint monitoring, protection, and promotion of human</p>	<p>(14c) Concurrent Strategies for better collaboration between Commissions &</p>	<p>(14d) Concurrent Advocacy and awareness using alternative media & technology</p>



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		rights	Communities	
	<i>This session explores what we can learn from Commissions of the global south for Community - Commission engagement. It focuses on identifying positive examples and best practices regarding relations with civil society and communities.</i>	<i>This session explores strategies for partnerships between Commissions and Communities to monitor, protect, and promote human rights in Canada.</i>	<i>This session explores strategies to enhance communications between Commissions and Communities to support the full range of Commission and Community human rights activity. This will include a discussion of the Coalition of Municipalities against Racism and Racial Discrimination as a possible way forward.</i>	<i>This session explores the various internet and media applications including alternative media that can be used as tools in the advancement of human rights. It focuses on what Communities and Commissions are doing to embrace new technologies and alternative mediums in their work.</i>
2:15-2:45pm	(15) Plenary Keynote			
2:45-3:00pm	Break			
3:00-4:00pm	(16) Concurrent Sessions What we learned and where are we going?			
	<i>Participants are divided into groups along specific focus areas to formulate action plans and strategies for greater Community-commission collaboration.</i>			



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4:05-4:30pm	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>(17) Plenary</i> Conclusion & moving forward together</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Strategies developed will be briefly shared in plenary and concluding remarks will be offered.</i></p>
Evening	<p style="text-align: center;">CASHRA executive members dinner</p>