

Events & Outreach Round Up January to July 2014 (1/10)

Press Conference to Challenge Defamatory Comments about NCCM | January 28, 2014



Press Conference in Charles Lynch room in Parliament Building

In response to defamatory remarks made by the Prime Minister's communications director, NCCM announced that it had served a notice of libel on the offending parties. The conference was held in the Charles Lynch room on Parliament Hill and included NCCM's executive director, Ihsaan Gardee, NCCM legal counsel Nader Hassan, Canadian Council of Muslim Women's representative, Farhat Rehman, and the national coordinator for the International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group (ICLMG)'s, Roch Tasse and Anne Dagenais.

The conference was covered extensively in the national press with stories appearing on the [CBC](#), [Globe](#), [Toronto Star](#), and [National Post](#).



Press Conference for the Outaouais Gathering | February 5, 2014

NCCM Human Rights Coordinator, Amy Awad, attended the press conference for the Outaouais Gathering for Equality and Freedom of Conscience. Held in the Gatineau City Hall, it launched a declaration against the Quebec Charter of Values.



Press Conference at Gatineau City Hall

Moderated by community activist and former Quebec Solidaire candidate Bill Clennet, the conference included a cross-section of Muslim women speaking about the impact of the proposal on them.



Panel Discussion on Quebec Charter of Values | February 18, 2014

NCCM Human Rights Coordinator, Amy Awad, attended the panel discussion organized by the Muslim Law Students Association at the University of Ottawa. The discussion, which centered on the negative impact of the proposed Quebec legislation, was moderated by Law School Dean and former CCLA general counsel, [Nathalie Des Rosiers](#). The panel consisted of: Anna Shea, Legal Advisor to [Amnesty International](#), [Natasha Bakht](#), Professor at the University of Ottawa Faculty of Law, and Krista Riley, Editor-in-Chief of [Muslimah Media Watch](#) and Member of the Collective des féministes musulmanes du Québec.

Canadian Muslim Leadership Institute Round Table | Winnipeg, February 26, 2014

For the second year in a row, NCCM was pleased to take part in the CMLI's annual training session for emerging leaders entitled "Women & Leadership."

Amira Elghawaby, while on maternity leave, joined other panelists via videoconferencing to share her experiences as a leader in the Canadian Muslim community.

Her co-panelists were Judy Wasylycia-Leis, former Member of Parliament for Winnipeg-North, and Gertrude Hambira, Secretary General of GAPWUZ (General Agricultural and Plantation Workers' Union of Zimbabwe).

Close to a dozen young people took part in the panel which explored issues around female empowerment, overcoming barriers, and personal resilience.

Each year, the CMLI organizes a six-month program which includes three weekend retreats and three round-table discussions. Learn more about the organization [here](#).

Empowering Muslim Women: An Evening with Tayyibah Taylor | October 25, 2014

This engaging event was sponsored by the U.S. Embassy, the Ottawa Chapter of the Canadian Council of Muslim and Cordova Academy. It featured Tayyibah Taylor founding editor-in-chief and publisher of Azizah magazine.



Amy Awad with Tayyibah Taylor, publisher of Azizah magazine

NCCM human rights coordinator, Amy Awad, attended the event and particularly appreciated the focus on positive role-models for Muslim women and the emphasis on overcoming fear and prejudices in hope of making important contributions to communities and the world.

International Women's Day | March 8, 2014

NCCM, in collaboration with the Women's Event Network (WEN) marked, International Women's Day as a grassroots event aimed at women in the community to celebrate with their families.



NCCM coordinator, Shirin Edarechi

For over a year, Shirin Edarechi, NCCM's coordinator, has been a member of WEN's planning committee tasked with organizing campaigns to bring awareness about violence against women and public responsibility in stopping this violence. The

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planning committee started planning for this year's event in January and the event was held at the Ottawa City Hall. Ottawa Mayor, Jim Watson, was in attendance. The event included a variety of workshops for women.

Breaking the Silence | Ottawa, March 11, 2014

NCCM Human Rights Coordinator, Amy Awad, attended a community planning event organized by the Ottawa Police, Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre and the Victimology Program at Algonquin College. The full-day session sought to address issues of violence in the name of honour. It included a session and discussion with Jordanian author and women's rights activist Rana Husseini, a presentation for a study conducted by the Ottawa Rape Crisis centre as well as an opportunity for participants to discuss strategies and priorities to address problems related to violence based on honour.

The day was constructive and the participants were very well-informed about the potential dangers of attributing "so called" honour crimes to specific religious and cultural groups.

The session was referenced in an [oped](#) later published by NCCM in the Huffington Post.

Metropolis Conference Workshop on Creed in the Public Sphere | Gatineau Quebec, March 13, 2013

NCCM Human Rights Coordinator, Amy Awad, participated in a panel discussion on creed in the public sphere. The panel was organized by the Ontario Human Rights Commission as part of their

ongoing efforts to update their policy on creed and human rights.



NCCM Human Rights Coordinator delivering presentation of the Muslim experience

The National Metropolis Conference is an annual forum for researchers, policy makers, representatives from community and settlement organizations to get together to share and exchange knowledge and experience in the field of immigration and settlement.

Meeting with Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Thomas Mulcair | Mississauga, March 17, 2014



NCCM Executive Director with Hon. Thomas Mulcair

On March 17, 2014, NCCM Executive Director Ihsaan Gardee along with other leaders from the Muslim community in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) met with the Hon. Thomas Mulcair. The purpose of the meeting was to (re)introduce Mr.

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Mulcair to a broad spectrum of community and organization leaders from within the Canadian Muslim community and to encourage a frank and honest dialogue around some of the concerns Canadian Muslims have ranging from human rights and civil liberties issues to those around immigration and the recognition of foreign credentials.

Meeting with York Regional Police Chief, Eric Jolliffe | Aurora Ontario, March 28, 2014



On March 28, 2014 NCCM Executive Director Ihsaan Gardee met with Chief of Police for the York Region (YRP), Eric Jolliffe along with several of his team including Superintendent Tony Cusimano, Sgt. Brett Kemp from the Hate Crime Unit and and Det. Cst. Mark Topping. The purpose of the meeting, in part, was to introduce the YRP team to NCCM and the services it provides as well as to familiarize them with the organization's body of work over the past 14 years. The York Regional Police team in turn gave an overview of the types of challenges they are facing and their efforts to positively engage different communities in helping to combat xenophobia and hate crimes against vulnerable minorities."

NCCM Gala Dinner | Toronto, March 29, 2014

Over 220 guests joined the NCCM including community leaders, provincial and federal

politicians as well as media representatives. The evening's proceedings featured a keynote speech by author and academic Dr. Reza Aslan and also included the presentation of an award to honour the York Regional Police (YRP) for their efforts to embody, through their words and actions, the force's motto of "Deeds Speak".



NCCM Staff and Board Members with Toronto Mayoral Candidate Olivia Show and author Reza Aslan

Canadian actor Zaib Shaikh, who many know from his role as the Imam on CBC's Little Mosque on the Praire, kept the crowd entertained and engaged as the evening's Special Guest Master of Ceremonies.

The NCCM was honoured to host elected representatives including members of both provincial and federal parliaments. MPs Andrew Cash and Dan Harris gave their best wishes on behalf the federal NDP caucus and the Leader of the Opposition Hon. Thomas Mulcair. Liberal MPs Hon. John McCallum and Dr. Kirsty Duncan gave greetings on behalf of their leader Justin Trudeau. Ontario Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation Glen Murray expressed greetings on behalf of Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne. Then-MPP for Trinity-Spadina Rosario Marchese conveyed the greetings of the Ontario NDP and its leader Andrea Horwath.

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Conference on Human Rights Situation in Egypt Parliament Hill, May 28, 2104



NCCM Human Rights Coordinator, Amy Awad, attended a parliamentary conference about the human rights situation in Egypt. The event organized by Amnesty International and the Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy brought together a panel of distinguished speakers.

Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy 
Coalition Égyptienne Canadienne pour la Démocratie

Panellists discussed the Canadian government's response to the detention and trial of Canadian journalist, Mohamed Fahmy and Sarah Attia, the Canadian wife of permanent resident and human rights champion, Khaled Al Qazzaz, currently detained without charge in Egypt shared her family's story. Attendees and speakers included Members of Parliament, Wayne Marston and Lysane Blanchette-Lamothe and Senator Mobina Jaffer as well as different political staffers and members of the Canadian Egyptian community.

Workshop reviewing preliminary findings of TSAS Sponsored Project | Ottawa, May 28, 2014

NCCM Human Rights Coordinator, Amy Awad, attended a workshop organized by TSAS (Canadian

Network for Research on Terrorism, Security and Society).



In this workshop, researchers associated with new research projects presented their findings. It was an important opportunity for NCCM to provide feedback to them as they are composing their final reports.

Meeting with CAJM and Beyond Faith, Beyond Race Concert | Toronto, March 30, 2014



**NCCM Executive Director Ihsaan Gardee with Cantor
Benny Maissner**

On the evening of March 30, 2014 NCCM Executive Director Ihsaan Gardee attended a meeting of the Canadian Association of Jews and Muslims to discuss how Muslims and Jews in Canada can work together and build relations. This was followed by the Beyond Race, Beyond Faith concert - part of the Holy Blossom Temple Musical Heritage Concert Series. The concert was performed by an international trio ensemble featuring Jewish-Israeli Udi Bar-David, cellist with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Founding Artistic Director of Intercultural Journeys, Riad Abdel-

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Gawad, Egyptian virtuoso violinist and composer and Rolando Morales Matos, Puerto Rican composer and solo percussionist, who perform Jewish and Arab music encouraging dialogue among Arabs, Christians, Jews and Muslims. Together with Cantor Maissnor they created a message of peace.

Tarbiyah Institute Speech Competition | Ottawa, April 2014

NCCM Human Rights Coordinator, Amy Awad, joined Ottawa physician Asma Amjad to judge the Tarbiyah Learning Institute's high school girls speech competition.



The competition held at a local community restaurant featured about 12 young women who had prepared impressive speeches on a variety of topics from the mundane to the most profound.

ICLMG Semi-Annual General Assembly | Montreal, May 6, 2014

NCCM Executive Director Ihsaan Gardee attended the International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group (ICLMG)'s Semi-Annual General Assembly in Montreal. As a member of ICLMG's Steering Committee and a participant in the meeting NCCM updated the group on some of its work on various issues including its defamation case against the Prime Minister's Office.

Several other issues related to ICLMG's mandate were discussed including various pieces of legislation Bill C-13 (online surveillance) and Bill C-24 (stripping of Canadian citizenship) being pushed through Parliament. ICLMG has endorsed a brief tabled by Lawyers Rights Watch Canada at the UN Human Rights Council, titled [Canada: The Shrinking Space for Dissent in Canada](#). ICLMG signed on to a letter sent to PM Harper on the issue of privacy. The letter was prepared by the team at CIPPIC (a law and technology clinic based at the Centre for Law, Technology & Society at the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Law in Canada) and endorsed by NCCM as well as other major civil liberties groups, academics and privacy organizations. ICLMG also endorsed the "[Ottawa Declaration](#)" drafted during the New Transparency Conference (organized by the Surveillance Centre at Queen's) held at Ottawa U. on May 9-10.

The seven-point statement is aimed at improving accountability for state surveillance. It calls for a public process to come up with a comprehensive legal framework for information and privacy rights, building on the Canadian Charter of Rights and UN principles.

Clothesline Project | Ottawa, May 25, 2014

NCCM, in collaboration with the Women's Event Network (WEN) organized this year's clothesline project in Minto Park in downtown Ottawa. The project gives women, children, and survivors of violence a chance to paint a t-shirt to hang on the line for all to see. These t-shirts represent a public statement about the impact of violence in their lives, and is an important step in the healing journey.

In addition, in order to share the message that ending violence against women is a society

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responsibility and not exclusively a private matter, NCCM organized a painting party in its Ottawa office.



NCCM staff (L-R) Amira Elghawaby, Amy Awad, and Ihsaan Gardee

The clothesline project is an international event.

AFP Muslim Philanthropy Conference | Ottawa, June 3, 2014



NCCM Executive Director Ihsaan Gardee with fellow panelists Imam Dr. Zijad Delic (SNMC – South Nepean Muslim Community) and Rabia Khedr ED of the Canadian Association of Muslims with Disabilities. The session was moderated by Ms. Lula Adam, Volunteer Coordinator & Community Engagement with Interval House of Ottawa

In addition to his speaking role as part of the Fundraisers Panel at [The Muslim Philanthropy Conference](#), NCCM Executive Director Ihsaan Gardee also worked as part of the organizing committee which included Conference Chair Fatma El-Mehelmy, Ouida Loeffelholtz, Janet Kranz and Diane Landry to help plan and execute this event. This was the tenth gathering of the Diversity to Inclusion Series, a groundbreaking initiative organized by the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) Foundation for Philanthropy – Canada in cooperation with its Greater Toronto and Ottawa chapters.



NCCM Executive Director Ihsaan Gardee with awarding winning author, activist, and keynote speaker Dr. Izzeldin Abuelaish

This conference brought together philanthropists, community leaders, fundraisers and volunteers in an effort to start a conversation about how charities are working with Muslim communities in Ontario and beyond to advance the causes that we all stand behind. We were delighted to be bring together many of the stakeholders of from different Muslim communities to share their insights.

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WSOC Annual Parliamentary Dinner | Ottawa, June 4, 2014



NCCM Executive Director with Minister of State (Multiculturalism), the Hon. Tim Uppal, M.P., P.C.

NCCM Executive Director Ihsaan Gardee attended the WSO Canada's annual Parliamentary Dinner on the evening of Wednesday June 4th at the Library and Archives Canada Building in Ottawa. For the past 30 years, WSO has been holding the Annual Parliamentary Dinner in order to raise awareness about important human rights issues and to foster dialogue between Parliamentarians and Canadian Sikhs.



NCCM Executive Director with Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, the Hon. Chris Alexander, M.P., P.C.

This year's keynote speaker was Dr. Colin Gonsalves, senior advocate at the Supreme Court of India and a prominent human rights advocate, who is a recipient of the International Human Rights

Award from the American Bar Association. WSO Canada also honoured the Pinkerton-Settels family for their courageous stand in pulling their sons in protest to the Quebec Soccer Associations' ban on turbans.



NCCM Executive Director with Craig Scott, M.P. & Official Opposition Critic for Democratic & Parliamentary Reform

Walk for Refugees | Ottawa, June 19, 2014

NCCM staff and volunteers joined a broad coalition of community activists and leaders in the Ottawa event for the National Walk for Refugees.



NCCM Staff and Volunteer (L to R) Amira Elghawaby (and baby Karim), Ihsaan Gardee, Shirin Ederachi, Amy Awad, Sadaf Wasim

NCCM staff and volunteers in Ottawa joined the walk with refugees for a stronger Canada. The Coalition in Ottawa for Refugees (COR) brought together broad cross-section of local groups for a

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lunch-hour rally in support of refugees. The event was part of a larger national effort with many different events held in different cities under the same theme.



Ottawa Centre MP Paul Dewar

The guest speakers compared Canada's response to the recent crisis in Syria to Project 4000, Ottawa's historic response to the Indochinese boat people in 1979-80. Information was also shared about private sponsorship and how people can help Syrian (and other) refugees find safety in Canada.

Ottawa Islamic School Graduation Ceremony | Ottawa, June 21, 2014



**NCCM Executive Director Ihsaan Gardee addresses the
2014 graduating class of the Ottawa Islamic School**

On June 21, 2014, NCCM Executive Director Ihsaan Gardee was honoured to be invited to address the 2014 graduating class from the Ottawa

Islamic School at Algonquin College which also coincided with the 10th Anniversary of the first graduating class.

The theme for this year's address was perseverance and being active citizens. Other speakers at the event included CBC's Adrian Harewood, former Ottawa Mayor and MPP Bob Chiarelli, and Shk. Ismail Al-Batnuni from the Assunah Muslim Association of Ottawa.

Welcome to Imam Sikander Hashmi | Ottawa, June 25, 2014



NCCM Executive Director Ihsaan Gardee joined other Ottawa Muslim community leaders to welcome Imam Sikander Hashmi to the city. Imam Sikander joins the Ottawa community from Kingston, ON where he had previously been the Imam at the Kingston Islamic Centre.

Listen Imam Sikander's interview with CBC Radio [here](#).



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The NCCM is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit grassroots advocacy organization. It is a leading voice for Muslim civic engagement and the promotion of human rights.

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