



Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network | Réseau juridique canadien VIH/sida

L E G A L N E T W O R K N E W S

Issue 39 | Aug. 2010

### Post-Vienna Conference

AIDS 2010, the XVIII International AIDS Conference ([www.aids2010.org](http://www.aids2010.org)), held in Vienna in July, proved to be a successful event not only for the Legal Network, but also in terms of advancing the cause of a human rights approach to combating the epidemic. Under the theme “Rights Here, Rights Now”, the gathering of over 20 000 delegates focused on the role human rights must play in supporting the work of advocates, policy-makers, scientists, health workers and others who work to support those affected by HIV/AIDS.

The Legal Network was active on many fronts (see [www.aidslaw.ca/aids2010](http://www.aidslaw.ca/aids2010)). Staff attending the conference had a full schedule of meetings, panel- and poster-presentations, and other speaking engagements. In addition, the Legal Network and the Open Society Institute (OSI) took the lead in organizing the Human Rights Networking Zone. Located in the Global Village, the venue was one of the more popular gathering-spots for delegates and the general public. The Networking Zone had on hand a selection of HIV and human rights-related material from the Legal Network, OSI and Human Rights Watch. There were also daily sessions on a range of key issues, such as drug policy, sex work, women’s rights, criminalization of HIV transmission or exposure, and prisons. Visitors to the Networking Zone were also encouraged to pledge their support to the “Human Rights and HIV/AIDS: Now More Than Ever” campaign ([www.hivhumanrightsnow.org](http://www.hivhumanrightsnow.org)).

The key document to emerge from AIDS 2010 was the Vienna Declaration ([www.viennadeclaration.com](http://www.viennadeclaration.com)) — only the second such declaration to come out of an International AIDS Conference. The Declaration, a statement seeking to improve community health and safety by calling for the incorporation of scientific evidence into illicit drug policies, was drafted by international experts and initiated by leading global HIV and drug policy scientific bodies: the International AIDS Society, the International Centre for Science in Drug Policy, and the BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS.

### September 28 Rally in Ottawa

Save this date in your calendar! Canadians from all walks of life and several generations will gather on Parliament Hill in Ottawa at 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, September 28, to demand action by Canada and our Parliament to respond to AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other urgent global health needs. This Fall will be a *crucial* time for efforts to reform CAMR, Canada’s Access to Medicines Regime (see [www.aidslaw.ca/camr](http://www.aidslaw.ca/camr)). A Private Members’ Bill, C-393, represents our best hope to fix CAMR and make it work so that people in developing countries can access the life-saving medicines they need. The bill is currently before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology, which will hold hearings in October. Concerned Canadians need to remind Parliamentarians on September 28 and throughout the Fall that they must follow through on the government’s commitment made over six years ago. If you are in Ottawa on this date, please join us for this important call for action. The rally is being organized by the Legal Network, the National Advocacy Committee for the Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign of the Stephen Lewis Foundation, Universities Allied for Essential Medicines, and RESULTS Canada.

### Over 8 000 CAMR postcards

Canadians from across the country continue to call for CAMR reform. Hundreds of Grandmothers to Grandmothers groups and other grassroots supporters from across Canada have been showing their support for Bill C-393 by sending campaign postcards to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Technology. The Committee Clerk recently confirmed that their offices had received over 8 000 cards! This is an amazing demonstration of the importance that this piece of legislation holds for Canadians. We hope that this will make an impression on the members of the Committee when they begin their month-long review of Bill C-393 in October. Have you sent in your postcard? Contact Lindsey Amèrica-Simms at [lsimms@aidslaw.ca](mailto:lsimms@aidslaw.ca) to order your postcards today, and let the Committee know that you support CAMR reform and Bill C-393.

### Your opinions count

Over the last few months, we invited Legal Network members to complete our annual survey and provide feedback on our activities during the past year. We are pleased to hear from members that our publications have been well-received again this year, and that many of you have been able to use our work to enhance your capacity to address HIV-related human rights issues in your communities. Once again, our series of five updated info sheets on criminalization of HIV transmission was the most popular resource, with *Under the Skin: A People's Case for Prison Needle and Syringe Exchange Programs* coming a close second (both available at [www.aidslaw.ca/publications](http://www.aidslaw.ca/publications)). Thank you to all those who took the time to respond to this year's survey. It's not too late to provide us with your feedback if you didn't get a chance to participate. Send an e-mail titled "Survey response" to [info@aidslaw.ca](mailto:info@aidslaw.ca) and we'll send you the brief survey.

### Departure and new beginning

The Legal Network is sad to bid farewell to our Director of Communications, **Gilles Marchildon** (who played a key role in revamping this newsletter, among other things). But our loss is certainly a gain for one of the Legal Network's Toronto-based member organizations, Action positive : VIH/sida ([www.actionpositivevihsida.org](http://www.actionpositivevihsida.org)). The group provides services for the over 100 000 French-speakers in the country's largest city. We wish him well and are pleased Gilles will continue to devote his skills to the cause of HIV/AIDS in a new capacity.

### And in closing...

The Legal Network relies on multiple sources of funding in order to carry out its work promoting the human rights of people living with HIV and of communities vulnerable to HIV. Individual donations are a key source of funding that help ensure our independence. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation at [www.aidslaw.ca/donate](http://www.aidslaw.ca/donate).

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#### About the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network

The Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network ([www.aidslaw.ca](http://www.aidslaw.ca)) promotes the human rights of people living with and vulnerable to HIV/AIDS, in Canada and internationally, through research, legal and policy analysis, education, and community mobilization. The Legal Network is Canada's leading advocacy organization working on the legal and human rights issues raised by HIV/AIDS.

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