

PROPOSAL TO THE CALGARY CENTRE FOR GLOBAL COMMUNITY (CCGC)

Program title:

International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law Centre: *promoting the realisation of human rights through enhanced understanding of the law and states' duties therein.*

Proposal submitted by:

Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada and Lawyers' Rights Watch (Legal Research) Canada (LRWC).

The ***International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law Centre*** (Law Centre) proposal is submitted jointly, with a shared budget, by LRWC and Lawyers Against the War (LAW). This proposal from LRWC addresses international human rights law education programs for the Law Centre. A companion proposal from LAW outlines international humanitarian law (IHL) education programs.

Abstract:

LRWC proposes, as a central component of the CCGC, a Law Centre that will offer programs designed to introduce, inform and engage the public about the critical role of International Human Rights Law (IHRL) in realising a global society founded on peace and dignity. The Law Centre will offer information, education and capacity-building on IHRL, both within Canada and internationally as well as undertaking research and facilitating civil society engagement and public policy dialogue on issues relating to the realisation of human rights articulated by IHRL. Currently, there is no facility in Canada providing an ongoing program of public IHRL education.

Background:

The gap between IHRL and practice is widening. United Nations Special Rapporteur Hina Jilani, reported an increase of almost 3,000% in communications regarding attacks on human rights defenders during her 6-year mandate.¹ Against a background of apparently growing reluctance by states to enforce IHRL and the erosion of rights in the name of security², effective prevention of and remedies for, human rights violations remain elusive and impunity for perpetrators remains the rule rather than the exception. Furthermore, states' authority and sovereignty on critical human rights issues are challenged by the forces of globalisation and the rise in influence of non-state actors such as multi-national corporations. These challenges are evident across the full range of human rights – civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, prompting difficulties and confusion in the work of elected leaders, policy-makers, jurists, activists, analysts and educators alike.

Enhanced public knowledge and understanding of the purpose and substance of IHRL will foster improved implementation and enforcement. A comprehensive course of accessible studies on IHRL is urgently needed to improve public awareness of the universality of fundamental rights and the duty of states to prevent and remedy violations. The need to know extends across the spectrum, from citizens to advocates to government and corporate policy makers.

¹ *Promotion and Protection of Human Rights: Human Rights Defenders*, Report submitted by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights defenders, Hina Jilani, 23 January 2006. E/CN.4/2006/95, para. 35.

² The Commission of Inquiry into the Actions of Canadian Officials in Relation to Maher Arar, which highlighted 'troubling questions about the role of Canadian officials' in this and other cases. (Press Release, Commission of Inquiry September 18, 2006).

The Law Centre proposal describes a multi-faceted approach to closing this gap by providing education, practical support and leadership delivered through the ‘three centres in one’ proposed by CCGC.

Specific aims:

Using the three-centre concept, LRWC will design and deliver public IHRL education programs at varying levels of complexity to:

- Enhance knowledge and understanding of the purpose, substance and scope of IHRL and of the potential of IHRL as a tool to achieve universal respect for human rights;
- Create awareness of IHRL of Canada’s role to promote adherence to IHRL;
- Promote respect for the rights defined by IHRL;
- Build the capacity of NGOs and individuals to participate in the development of IHRL;
- Contribute, through collaboration and partnership with others, to the development of a culture of peace within Canada and internationally.

CCGC visitors will have the option of pursuing IHRL topics introduced in the Visitors’ Centre in greater depth at the Conference and Connections Centres.

In the Connections Centres LRWC will offer lectures and courses on topics of general interest, topics tailored to meet special information needs and topics on current IHRL issues.

IHRL presentations at the Conference and Connections Centres will maximize access to internationally recognised IHRL experts and opportunities for international dialogue through use of video conferencing and other information and communication technologies. Jurists with IHRL expertise have confirmed interest in participating in such public education program. Following are some preliminary proposed aims for education modules suitable for each centre.

For the Visitors Centre:

To design and produce activities and installations introducing visitors to IHRL using a variety of educational mediums including storyboards, documentaries, self-directed computer links and video games and theatre presentations. Each module should indicate access to more information. Activities and installations will include:

1. Storyboard illustrations of IHRL development history and of international and regional organizations such as the United Nations (UN), the Organization of American States (OAS), the African Union (AU), the Council of Europe and the European Union (EU) with human rights charters.
2. Access to the human rights instruments and monitoring bodies of the UN, OAS, AU and EU, through self-directed computer-based programs.
3. Storyboard illustrations of developing regional human rights charters.
4. Introductory virtual tours of significant human rights institutions and tribunals such as United Nations, International Court of Justice, African Court of Justice, European Court of Human Rights, Inter-American Court of Human Rights.
5. Exhibits and thematic displays on rights of particular groups of people and days significant to human rights (e.g. International Women’s Day, International Day for the Elimination of Racism, World Refugee Day, International Day for Older Persons, World Children’s Day, International Day of the World’s Indigenous People).
6. An exhibit demonstrating applied IHRL.

For the Conference centre:

To promote dialogue, information exchange and collaboration on IHRL between countries and sectors, experts and citizens, through:

1. Workshops and dialogues on current IHRL issues between the CCGC and participants and experts in other locations through the use of video-conferencing.
2. An annual conference, beginning in the 3rd year of CCGC operation, mandated to produce law-based analyses of and resolutions proposals for, current IHRL issue(s).

For the Connections Centre:

To design and deliver a curriculum of lectures and courses on IHRL that meets the needs of the general public and the special information needs of others such as NGOs, advocates, journalists, students, educators and policy makers. Lectures and courses will be of varying length from two hours to five days. Content will range from broad introductory themes (development, purpose, implementation and enforcement of IHRL and Canada's duty, capacity and approach to implementation and enforcement) to more specialised areas (economic and social rights, the application of IHRL to domestic and international crises and problems and the justiciability of social, economic and environmental rights).

N.B. Possible IHRL topics are listed in Appendix I. Final curriculum planning will be based on the survey results and availability of lecturers and participants.

Methods and resources required:

The Law Centre public education programs will span teaching, research, civil society engagement and public policy dialogue. The program approach recognises and will seek to strengthen the linkages between these. Key principles guiding the program include academic excellence, solidarity, respect and care for colleagues, ethical integrity and ongoing inquiry. LAW will take a learning approach to the first three years of this program of work, with a strong focus on monitoring and evaluation towards ensuring programs meet real needs, build legitimacy, and maintain a standard of excellence. The Law Centre's approach will contribute to and maximise the synergy with the work and operations of CCGC.

LRWC will:

1. Identify IHRL education needs through a survey of NGOs, interviews with experts, educators and activists and focus groups to critique and develop proposals for all three centres.
2. Prepare a curriculum of IHRL lectures and courses for the Connections Centre, including the identification of resource materials, lecturers and panellists and possible participants. Design and delivery of lecture, courses and materials will be done in consultation with knowledgeable NGOs, jurists and experts working with and impacted by issues and situations involving IHRL.
3. Create a program of IHRL seminars, workshops and dialogues for the Conference Centre.
4. Design IHRL education installations for the Visitors' Centre, select existing audio/visual materials, design content of additional audio/visual materials, identify theatre productions and design lectures.
5. Develop a IHRL database and website for the Law Centre.

LRWC will require assistance with the:

- Design and selection of Visitors' Centre installations from educators and museum experts.
- Design and production of computer and video games and links from information and communications technology (ICT) and museum experts.
- Design of the database and website from ICT experts.
- Production of additional audio-visual materials from film producers and specialists.
- Production of storyboard and other still installations from graphic design specialists.

Governance of LRWC work will provide a high degree of accountability and fiscal responsibility and will accord with CCGC governance and all statutory requirements.

Budget estimate:

This budget estimate outlines the combined anticipated development and administration costs of the IHRL and IHL programs for the Law Centre for the first year of operation. Costs include those associated with researching, developing and refining the various programs of the Centre to develop them to sufficient standard for production and delivery³. In the first year, LRWC and LAW anticipate the following outcomes

- Research to identify opportunities for IHL and IHRL education and other initiatives with relevant NGOs. The methodology would include a survey of NGOs, interviews with key informants and activists, and focus groups to critique and develop proposals.
- Preparation of a curriculum of IHL and IHRL lectures and courses for the Connections Centre, including the identification of appropriate resource materials and making pre-arrangements for lecturers and panellists.
- Creation of a program of IHL and IHRL seminars, workshops and dialogues for the Conference Centre.
- Design of IHL and IHRL education installations for the Visitors’ Centre.
- Development of a database and website

Area	Details	Amount \$
Personnel	Director	75,000
	Part-time Administrator	30,000
Administration	Communications, accounting, printing, postage, phone/teleconferencing, office supplies, etc.	10,000
Research and development	Research, consultation, travel and program development	20,000
	Design and development of promotional material, education resource materials etc.	15,000
	Purchase of resource materials.	5,000
Conference in CCGC ‘s 3 rd year	Theme will focus on law-based analysis resolutions of current IHRL or IHL issues.	Not included
Web page		3,000
Data base		1,500
Total		\$159,500

Statement of significance:

The Law Centre, through IHRL public education, will make a significant contribution to enhanced implementation and enforcement of existing IHRL and to the preservation of threatened rights. Law Centre programs will contribute directly to the realization of the CCGC’s goals including raising public understanding of issues essential to human well-being and improving individual and groups skills to advocate for enhanced implementation and enforcement of human rights law domestically and globally.

³ The production costs of the educational materials for the three Centres are not included in this budget estimate. These costs can be calculated once the specific materials have been designed and after investigations of economies available through participating in CCGC-led tenders and resource sharing with other CCGC participants.

Information on LRWC and the authors:

LRWC is a committee of Canadian lawyers who promote human rights and the rule of law internationally by providing support to lawyers and other human rights defenders in danger because of their advocacy. LRWC is an NGO with Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN and received the 2004 Renate Shearer Memorial Award in recognition of 'exceptional work in promoting international standards aimed at protecting the rights and the safety of human rights defenders world wide.' LRWC and LRW(Legal Research)C are incorporated under the Canada Incorporations Act. LRW(Legal Research)C has charitable tax status.

LRWC has engaged in human rights work in over 40 countries in cooperation with many human rights and legal organizations. LRWC work includes: in-country investigations, letter-writing, production of reports, monitoring trials, preparation of legal briefs, publication of public statements, research and education. LRWC will draw on the expertise of over 200 LRWC member lawyers and law professors and that of other NGOs.

Gail Davidson is a member of the Law Society of BC, the founder and Executive Director of LRWC, the co-founder and Chair of Lawyers Against the War and the 2004 recipient of the University of British Columbia, Alma Mater Society Great Trekker Award for her contributions to human rights.

Siobhán Airey has worked to reconcile social policy, human rights and community development in various jurisdictions including Ireland, the European Union, Bangladesh and Canada. She has an LLM in International Human Rights Law from the Irish Centre for Human Rights, National University of Ireland Galway and a Masters in Equality Studies from the University College Dublin.

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