



CPCCA

Coalition parlementaire canadienne
de lutte contre l'antisémitisme

Canadian Parliamentary Coalition
to Combat Antisemitism

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NEWS RELEASE

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Canadian parliamentary antisemitism inquiry hears first witnesses

Canadian MP's hear testimony about global antisemitism from internationally respected experts

(November 2nd, 2009)

The Canadian Parliamentary Coalition to Combat Antisemitism opened a series of domestic hearings today with two panels of international parliamentarians and experts:

Panel One:

- Rt. Hon. Dr. Denis MacShane
- Prof. Gert Weisskirchen

Panel Two:

- Hon. Canadian MP, Irwin Cotler
- Dr. Charles Small Director
- Dr. Gregg Rickman

The purpose of the inquiry is to probe into the growing problem of antisemitism both domestically and internationally, and provide practical and uniquely Canadian recommendations as to how to combat it. "Most people think of antisemitism in terms of white supremacists and neo-Nazis; they infer it is a problem of the past, but unfortunately they are mistaken," said CPCCA Inquiry Panel Chair Mario Silva who noted: "Antisemitism has become an increasing problem especially in Europe, and we want to make sure that doesn't happen here."

The committee has invited witnesses with a variety of experiences and backgrounds; from the international experts who appear today, to the testimony of witnesses who have experienced antisemitism in Canada first hand. The Panel has also invited a number of non-governmental organizations which propose mechanisms that civil society can use to combat antisemitism.

We want Canadians to learn from the experience of other countries that are fighting to eliminate antisemitism” said Inquiry Panel Vice-Chair Scott Reid. “The phenomenon seems once again to be on the rise, and this panel of international experts will help us to determine to what extent Canada is in danger of experiencing the same thing.”

In an effort to better understand the phenomenon of campus antisemitism in Canada the Presidents of twenty five major Canadian Universities have been invited to testify before the Inquiry Panel on the 24th of November. “We are very pleased that Ryerson University President Dr. Sheldon Levy, former President of Concordia Fred Lowy and Université de Montréal President Luc Vinet have agreed to appear before us,” said Silva. “We hope that the Presidents will help us in understanding the issue and devising practical solutions.”

The committee has invited over forty individuals and organizations to appear before them during their hearings in November and December, and has received more than 150 written submissions.. For an updated list of witnesses, dates and locations of hearings visit the Coalition’s website at www.cpcca.ca/inquiry.