

***Human Trafficking in Canada Working Group***  
***Notes for the Conference Call – 22 September 2014***

Present: Jennifer Lucking (Chair – RCA), Julia Beazley (EFC), Glendyne Gerrard (CM&A), Brenda Mann (CBOQ), Jessica McEachie (SA), Peter Noteboom (CCC), Diane Dwarka (WICC), Carolyn Seabrook (ACC), Michelle Miller (REED & CBWC), Savelia Curniski (OCA)

**1. Opening Prayer**

Led by Jennifer Lucking using this week's prayer from the *Buying Sex is Not a Sport* campaign

**2. Agenda check and review of the notes from previous meetings**

**3. Individual Member Updates**

What is going on in your area, and how can we together strengthen your efforts through this working group?

Michelle Miller: Update on trafficking conviction in the Vancouver area, and Michelle has developed a new course called Intelligent Love... 8 week course for 10 people on issues like gender socialization, trafficking, prostitution, colonization, pornography, for people of faith, and how we can engage in faithful organizing.

Savelia Curniski: A couple of cases in Saskatchewan on the production of child pornography... court case now in process. Starting to work with local police, training them in a Forum. Difficult to convene, but very good experience. Internationally, a safe house has been completed. Now there is too much demand, and how do we make decisions. An educational live-in centre in Ukraine... and the connection to the conflict in Eastern Ukraine

Diane Dwarka: Some things have happened across the country with WICC (Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada) <http://www.wicc.org/world-day-of-prayer/grants-criteria/>

Carolyn Seabrook: One-day workshop on human trafficking in Ottawa, led by Rev. Terry Robinson.

Julia Beazling: Currently listening to the Bill C-36 debate in the House Committee. Tracking the debate... not sure how long it will go on. Julia will also be following up with specific meetings with MPs. One Senator has also been pushing a number of other systemic issues that affect trafficking: affordable housing, and so on. Down the road, is there more that we can do on that topic. Speaking to churches regarding the role they can play. Surprised by some of the Liberal Senators who seemed to be on side, but are not supporting the bill. She will be following up with them, whether mainly partisan or principled opposition.

Glendyne Gerrard: Information Forums continue to be held across the country. Community, police and other target communities. The next one is in Belleville, ON, and then the next one in Steinbach,

Manitoba. Lots of strong police and community resource persons engaged. Co-hosting the week-long training in Saskatoon too. Here is a link to the event calendar... lots of opportunities for learning here: <http://defenddignity.ca/eventscalendar/>. Now focusing in on commercial sexual exploitation, and the wider set of issues there: pornography, public health, trafficking, and others. The Christian & Missionary Alliance has been focused on helping local congregations to become involved. So Glendyne is exploring lots of different ways to do that. Lots of other good organizing work going on.

Jessica McEachie: Salvation Army has, this weekend, the International Day of Prayer for Victims of Human Trafficking. Each year packages with sermons, Bible studies, prayers and so on is sent out to help local churches become involved. Politically, there have also been some meetings with policy people in the Capitol.

Brenda Mann: *Buying Sex is Not a Sport* Forum to raise awareness in Ontario Baptist churches.

Jennifer Lucking: *Buying Sex is Not a Sport* program. Also responding to Bill C-36 questions and concerns. Wrote an article for the "Do Justice" blog. Wrote the brief that went to the Justice Committee. Not just seeing Bill C-36 as a narrow approach to ending commercial sex work exploitation, but addressing the root causes.

Peter Noteboom: Poverty in Canada work, and the plans for the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Assembly.

Diane Dwarka: The new Canadian Museum for Human Rights opened in Winnipeg this weekend. There is no mention of trafficking in that Museum so far.

#### **4. Bill C-36 updates**

What did we accomplish, what feedback have we received, what are the next steps we can undertake together?

Committee debate is currently under way. Members are organizing follow-up meetings with MPs and Senators. One NDP person made some very strong comments to issues of poverty.

Lots of appreciation for this group's work on the brief and its submission.

The submissions and letters are all available at: <http://www.councilofchurches.ca/social-justice/human-trafficking-in-canada/>.

Peter and Jessica will bring follow-up to Bill C-36 to the new Poverty in Canada Working Group at the CCC.

#### **5. Buying Sex is Not a Sport - events upcoming**

Information about the initiative, but also... do we want to request an endorsement of the campaign by the working group as a whole? By our individual denominations? By the church leaders or Governing Board of the CCC? How can we together support a shared communications strategy?

There are a series of Forums scheduled: <http://www.buyingsexisnotasport.ca/?cat=2>. The prayer guide is also available on that website. Jennifer provided lots of detail on the content of the events. More and more, the conversation is about the factors that drive the demand for commercial sexual exploitation. Looking ahead to the Pan Am games, and planning a series of stand-ins. The volunteers

will need substantial training: love, non-violence, silence. On other occasions, these have been very difficult demonstrations.

Questions about counter demonstrations, questions about how to respond to violent responses. Dialogue followed about how best to be prepared for opposition. Lots of encouragement for this campaign and the people involved.

## **6. CCC November meetings**

Clarifying the cost, attendance, and funding available to attend. The Human Trafficking in Canada fund at the CCC has a balance we can use to facilitate everyone's attendance at this event.

Some agenda planning, and naming what we would like to accomplish that day so we can plan for an exceptional time together.

Agenda: Resourcing together about what next steps will be. One hour session on faith leaders organizing? What a movement looks like? Open up space for more partnerships and collaboration. Mostly saturated on content, more about energy for partnerships and movement building. This would be very beneficial for all of us. I would like more help on aboriginal women and how we address the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women. How do we understand issues that face them? How do we go forward in working together? Guest person who could do an hour of working with First Nations Women... does training on White settlers and aboriginal communities. Becoming allies in a movement like this.

Michelle may have a colleague along who can help to lead a session on this.

Peter will also check with how to connect with the Canadian Ecumenical Anti-Racism Network and the Canadian Churches' Forum on Global Ministries, who is meeting around the same time.

## **8. Closing**

Prayer of silence, in the tradition of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)