

## Call for Papers

### *Canada in a Diasporic Framework: Future Policies and Agendas*

Organized jointly by the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies, University of Toronto, and the International Institute for Diaspora Studies (A Division of the Zoryan Institute)

**May 15-17, 2009**

In an era of rapid globalization, the formal and informal power of border-crossing civil society networks is increasingly pertinent for policy-makers, business leaders, scholars and civil society. In this context, diasporas matter a great deal. They include a range of ethnic communities formed from various categories of people, such as political and war refugees, (im)migrants, and ethnic and racial minorities that have maintained a sense of collective identity away from their homeland, and they operate exemplary transnational networks between host states and homelands. While the present and potential importance of diaspora communities is gradually being recognized, the challenges they pose and the opportunities they represent for both their host countries and homelands are neither well enough understood nor sufficiently addressed.

Why do we need to be concerned about these issues in Canada, a country which, due to its stability, policy of Multiculturalism, Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and economic viability, has attracted over 113 different national communities? In the context of globalization, such groups are playing, and will increasingly play a crucial role in the evolution of Canada, whose diversity of cultures, along with its transnational economics and trade, offer an exceptional case study and model for understanding the future of this and many other countries.

The emerging field of “Diaspora Studies” provides a powerful lens through which to view and understand the contemporary fabric of Canadian society and the opportunities and challenges it faces. In an attempt to proactively address these pressing concerns, the University of Toronto’s Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies and the International Institute for Diaspora Studies are convening an international conference to address the character, capacity and concerns of Canadian Diaspora communities, as both domestic and international actors, in order to analyse, understand and project possible outcomes of these vital dynamics forging twenty-first century Canada. Though focusing primarily on the Canadian context, the conference will also seek to place Canada in a comparative international perspective, and to address diaspora issues pertinent to Canada, Europe, Australia, and the US, among others.

The “**Canada in a Diasporic Framework: Future Policies and Agendas**” will provide a forum for the interdisciplinary and comparative study of the challenges and opportunities diasporas bring to Canada in terms of cultural, political and trade interaction with the world. The conference will engage new and senior scholars, business leaders, policy-makers and representatives of Diaspora communities in Canada. Papers are invited under the following broad headings:

- Crossroads and Definitions: Addressing new approaches and opportunities for further research within Diaspora Studies
- Diaspora across the disciplines / Multidisciplinary vantage points
- Representations of Diaspora
- Integration, assimilation or alienation: an evaluation of the efficacy of the policy of multiculturalism
- Restrictions to integration in workforce and society
- Immigration changing politics
  - What are the priorities and visions of diasporan Canadians? Frank assessment of what they share with older Canadian populations and of possible zones of conflict and reconciliation, and of the changes that must come about in both communities. Asking how diasporans see Canada, multiculturalism and how their community can/will contribute to future of Canada/Canadian identity Diaspora (interest, networks, citizenship)
- Powers of Diasporas as transnational actors in a globalised world

**The deadline for applications is October 12, 2008.** Please submit an abstract of 250 - 500 words to Megan Swan: [zoryaninstitute@zoryaninstitute.org](mailto:zoryaninstitute@zoryaninstitute.org) or Antonela Arhin [cdts@utoronto.ca](mailto:cdts@utoronto.ca)