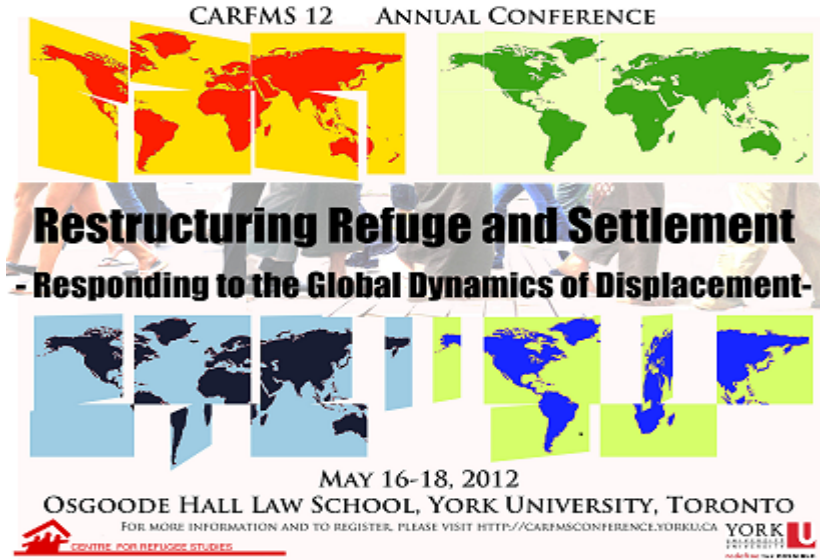


**Post Conference Report**

**RESTRUCTURING REFUGEE AND SETTLEMENT: RESPONDING TO THE GLOBAL DYNAMICS OF DISPLACEMENT  
May 16-18, 2012.**

*Hosted by York University’s Centre for Refugee Studies, the Canadian Association for Refugee and Forced Migration Studies celebrated its fifth annual conference, held at York University’s prestigious Osgoode Hall Law School.*



This year’s CARFMS Annual Conference was an exciting and successful collaboration of participants in the field of refugee and forced migration studies from all over the world. Over 170 participants, 91 presenters and 23 chairpersons from over 15 countries gathered in Toronto this spring to share research and discuss policy and advocacy in the field. Held over three days at Toronto’s newly renovated Osgoode Hall Law School, one of the premier law schools in Canada that pioneered the study of refugee law and practice in Canada, the conference was coordinated by a team of organisers all over Canada, with the invaluable help of 20 student volunteers.

**Wednesday, May 16**

The CARFMS Annual Conference was officially launched on Wednesday evening with an open-to-the-public and the York University community opening keynote address by Dr. Volker Turk, Director, Division of International Protection, UNHCR, Geneva, Switzerland. Dr. Turk delivered a fascinating examination and deep reflection on the changing dynamics of global displacement. He also considered the important themes of contemporary challenges in the field including asylum law, interdependence amongst States, and the challenge of global governance. Following Dr. Turk’s address, an evening of networking took place bringing together the conference participants, presenters and special guests.



Prior to Dr. Turk’s keynote public address, York University President Mamdouh Shoukri welcomed everyone to the 2012 CARFMS Annual Conference at York University *via* a video address. He reminded everyone of the incredibly

important work that they are doing on behalf of refugees in the world today and the leading role that the Centre for Refugee Studies has played in advancing knowledge in this important field of study.

Associate Dean (Research) for the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, Barbara Crow, brought her own greetings to the CARFMS Annual Conference participants and formally introduced Dr. Volker Turk for his keynote address. She also thanked Dr. Turk for his address and presented a small gift as a token of our appreciation for being the opening keynote speaker for our 2012 CARFMS Annual Conference.

**Thursday, May 17**

Thursday morning began with welcoming addresses from York University’s Osgoode Hall Law School’s Dean Lorne Sossin, and CARFMS President James C. Simeon, Deputy Director, Centre for Refugee Studies, York University. This was followed by the much anticipated announcement of the winner of the CARFMS Graduate Student Essay Contest, Christophe Sevigny.



As refugee and forced migration studies research and advocacy is not confined to the classroom, CARFMS welcomed a spoken word piece by the Toronto-based artist SPIN El Poeta, which is available at <http://spinelpoeta.com/aboutspin.cfm>.

Before the conference broke out into panel sessions, Annual Conference participants had the pleasure of hearing the frank and dynamic keynote address by Lorne Waldman, Barrister & Solicitor, President, Canadian Association of Refugee Lawyers (CARL). Lorne Waldman reviewed the development of Canada’s refugee determination system over the last thirty years. He began by noting that as a student at Osgoode Hall Law School there were no courses on refugee or immigration law. He recalled his involvement on many of the leading cases in refugee law that he argued before all levels of the courts in Canada. However, he emphasized that the current Canadian Government was introducing some of the most repressive and regressive refugee policies that he had seen over his many years of practice in this field of law. Lorne Waldman’s keynote address is available at the following web link, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B30beLWCzjM&noredirect=1>.



Thursday was non-stop with the CARFMS Annual General Meeting taking place over lunch. By the time lunch was over, CARFMS had elected a brand new Executive. Welcome Morgan Poteet as the new CARFMS President!

Thursday afternoon saw the launch of this year’s CARFMS President James Simeon’s initiative, the innovative Online Research and Teaching Tool and Practitioners Forum (ORTT & PF) website. The ORTT & PF website will be launched officially at the International Association for the Study of Forced Migration (IASFM) international conference in Kolkata, India in January of 2013. The pilot of the ORTT website is available at <http://rfmsot.apps01.yorku.ca/home/>.

## Friday, May 18

Friday was equally exciting. Friday's keynote address was presented by the acclaimed Debbie Douglas, Executive Director, Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI). Her bold and passionate speech set the tone for Friday's panels, which highlighted Canada's refugee determination process, settlement issues, including identity, LGBT and gender issues, and xenophobia. To see and hear Ms. Douglas' full keynote address please visit the following link, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SwciUx3gRKA>.



Late afternoon was reserved for a special plenary session, Assisting and Protecting People Fleeing Violence and Conflict: Special Plenary Panel Session on "Generalized Violence" with the participation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The UNHCR is currently undertaking a number of major studies that are considering how the *1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees* and its *1967 Protocol* can be applied in situations where people are fleeing generalized violence. These studies will contribute to an expert conference that will consider the development of a new set of UNHCR guidelines for persons who are fleeing situations of extreme violence and armed conflict. CARFMS was very pleased to be able to host this outstanding panel of distinguished scholars and practitioners in the field of refugee and forced migration studies, in general, and international refugee law, in particular.



The session was chaired by Professor Emeritus Howard Adelman, Founding Director of the Centre for Refugee Studies, York University. An acclaimed group of leaders in the field contributed to the session: Dr. Kees Wouters, Senior Refugee Law Advisor, Division of International Protection, UNHCR, Geneva, Switzerland, Barbara Jackman, Barrister & Solicitor, Jackman, Nazami & Associates, Janet Dench, Executive Director, Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR), Justice James O'Reilly, Federal Court (Canada).

## Special events and activities

Alongside the performance by spoken word artist, SPIN El Poeta, the second annual CARFMS conference was full of special activities: book launches, community tables providing information on NGOs active in the field, ongoing research networks and projects, a walking tour of Toronto, and a screening of the refugee settlement film 'Nickel City Smiler'. More information about the film can be found at <http://www.nickelcitysmiler.com/>.

**Summary of Conference Evaluation Reports**

The CARFMS conference evaluation forms yielded a large number of responses from participants, and provided excellent feedback on the conference organisation, content, and panels. Of those who responded, open-ended and detailed comments and suggestions were provided, the most common of which are listed.

Great food and breaks	50%
Great networking	50%
Too many concurrent panels	42%
Not enough time for discussion in panels	38%
Great amount of presenters and topics	38%
Superb level of participants	29%
Website information was useful	25%
Maps/directions needed on website	25%

2012 CARFMS Annual Conference participants were also asked to identify the papers that they thought should be published in *Refuge: Canada’s Periodical on Refugees*. The list of the most frequently cited conference papers and presentations were compiled and sent to the Editor-in-Chief of *Refuge*, Professor Michael Barutciski. The top papers identified by the conference participants and the panel session chairpersons at the 2012 Conference will be invited to submit their papers for publication in *Refuge*.

The 2012 CARFMS Annual Conference organizers also received many informal positive comments on how well this year’s conference was organized and run. The conference organizers were especially pleased to be able to accommodate so many outstanding panel sessions, round tables and presentations. As the CARFMS Annual Conferences continue to develop and grow in reputation they attract more and more researchers, scholars, and practitioners from around the world. This year’s annual conference had a large contingent of presenters and participants from over 15 countries.

**2013 CARFMS Annual Conference**

The location of the next Annual Conference of the Canadian Association for Refugee and Forced Migration Studies, its sixth, will be held at the beautiful Saint Mary’s University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. We are also hoping that the Annual Conference after that, the 2014 CARFMS Annual Conference, will be held in Quebec City.

**Organising Team**

A big thank you must go out to the organizing team for this year’s conference!

- |  |               |                       |
|--|---------------|-----------------------|
| James C. Simeon, Immediate-Past President of CARFMS      | Idil Atak     | Heather Brady         |
| Michele Millard, Coordinator, Centre for Refugee Studies | Adrian Moss   | Christina Clark-Kazak |
| Jocelyn Kane, 2012 CARFMS Conference Coordinator         | Faith Chaput  | Jacqueline McAdam     |
| And the 20 CARFMS volunteers!                            | Susan McGrath |                       |

A link to the conference photos can be found at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/carfms/sets/72157629997233695/>

**Special Thanks to all our Sponsors**

We were very fortunate to be able to obtain a Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Conference grant to fund our 2012 CARFMS Annual Conference. We should like to thank the SSHRC Conference and Research Workshop Committee for awarding us a grant for our Annual Conference.

We are also very grateful for the support and assistance of the UNHCR. We should like to thank, in particular, Dr. Volker Turk, Director of the Division of International Protection, Geneva, Switzerland, for delivering our official opening keynote address, Furio De Angelis, UNHCR Representative for Canada, Rana Khan, Senior Legal Counsel, UNHCR Canada, and Dr. Kees Wouters, Senior Refugee Law Advisor, Division of International Protection, Geneva, Switzerland, for not only attending and participating in our 2012 CARFMS Annual Conference, but, for their time

and assistance in organizing our Special Plenary Panel Session on “Generalized Violence.” We look forward to working with the UNHCR on our future CARFMS Annual Conferences and other activities.

We would also like to thank the Refugee Research Network (RRN) for their support in being able to bring the winners of our Graduate Student Essay Contest to our 2012 CARFMS Annual Conference.

We would also like to thank the following organizations, academic units, and faculties at York University for their support of our 2012 CARFMS Annual Conference.

Associate Dean (Research), Barbara Crow, Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies  
The Jack and Mae Nathanson Centre on Transnational Human Rights, Crime and Security  
The School of Public Policy and Administration  
York Centre for Human Rights  
Centre for Refugee Studies  
York University Bookstore  
Osgoode Hall Law School

We are most grateful to all our sponsors and partners for their assistance in making our 2012 CARFMS Annual Conference such a great success!

Finally, we should like to extend our special thanks to all of the CARFMS members and this year’s annual conference participants for their time and effort in preparing and presenting their conference papers at our fifth annual conference. At this year’s annual conference we had more keynote addresses, conference papers, presentations, and more participants than at any other previous conference that we have held. The credit for this achievement and success goes to all our CARFMS members, supporters and sponsors. We would like to thank everyone for their time and effort and for helping our Association to further the protection and the rights of all those persons who are refugees and/or other forced migrants. With your ongoing support and assistance and sustaining membership we hope to continue to do so.

We look forward to meeting everyone again at the 2013 CARFMS Annual Conference that will be held at Saint Mary’s University in Halifax, Nova Scotia!!



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