

June Newsletter

Hong Kong
Refugee Advice
Centre

QUICK SEARCH

- Casework Update
- Training Weekend
- Development News
- HKRAC Clinical Legal Education Program
- Other News
- Wish List
- World Refugee Day Overview
- Network News
- HKD Invite

- *Contact Us*

Casework Update

Since January 2010, we have 31 new full representation clients. In addition, we have been able to expand our ability to provide more asylum seekers with assistance as UNHCR has recently allowed HKRAC to attend registration interviews.

- On December 16, 2009, a South Asian client was recognized as a refugee. Thanks to volunteer caseworker Alasdair Grant for representation on that case.
- On January 27, 2010, UNHCR recognized a South Asian refugee who had obtained self-representation advice from HKRAC volunteer caseworker Eileen Clarke.
- On March 10, 2010, a South Asian client was granted refugee status. Many thanks to Catherine Banson for her hard work and dedication in representing that client.
- On March 23, 2010, an African client was granted refugee status. Shauna Alexander, Johime Lee, and Andrew Lillis provided representation on that case.

Congratulations to those clients and their caseworkers!

Internship Opportunity

HKRAC is looking for fall casework interns with a strong commitment to human rights issues and excellent research, writing, and oral communication skills. Interns will conduct intake interviews with potential refugee clients, research and write legal memoranda. Other responsibilities may include taking the testimony of a client; drafting legal submissions; providing self-representation advice; helping to prepare for trainings, meetings, and other events.

The ideal candidate should have the following qualifications:

- Law student or law graduate;
- Demonstrated interest in human rights and refugee issues;
- Excellent oral and written communication skills;
- Excellent research skills;
- Experience working with asylum seekers and survivors of torture preferred;
- Fluency in English is required, and fluency in Arabic, French, Hindi, Pashto, Punjabi, Singhalese, Somali, Punjabi, Tamil, Urdu or other languages is preferred

To apply, email statement of interest, CV, and writing sample to Christine Lin, Legal Director, at clin@hkrac.org by June 21, 2010.

Training Weekend

Our upcoming training session for new refugee caseworkers will be held on the 5th and 6th June 2010 at Freshfields, Bruckhaus & Deringer. Many thanks to our law firm partner Freshfields!

Caseworker training weekends are designed to prepare volunteers to represent asylum-seekers filing for refugee protection before UNHCR in Hong Kong. Attendance is mandatory for new casework volunteers as well as HKRAC's Legal Clinic students (Please note that we kindly request volunteers to commit 5 - 10 hours per week over a 6 month term). Our next training session will be in September 2010, keep an eye on our website for updates.

HKRAC is extremely pleased to announce that Professor Stacy Caplow will be speaking in our upcoming training session. Professor Caplow is a leader in the field of clinical legal education and an expert in international refugee law. She currently serves as the Director of the Brooklyn Law School's Clinical Education Program and co-Directs the "Safe Harbor Project" asylum clinic in New York. Professor Caplow will be working with HKRAC this summer as a guest lecturer and clinical instructor when the new Refugee Legal Assistance Clinic launches in June.

Development News

2010 has already seen some exciting developments. We welcomed our new Development Officer Laura Lee to the team in March, and HKRAC's Development Committee has attracted many fantastic new members. If you would like to get involved, please email Laura at llee@hkrac.org

Event highlights:

- **“Soul Sisters” Concert**

HKRAC was invited to speak at the Kassia Women's Choir's “Soul Sisters” concert in March and raised over HKD \$17,000 in just two nights! We are grateful to Katterwall Director Bethan Greaves for having given us this opportunity, and to all those who gave donations.

- **RTHK interview**

HKRAC was fortunate to be interviewed live on radio by DJ Phil Whelan in April. Thanks again Phil and Bethan!

- **Wig and Pen Event**

HKRAC was invited to attend the annual ‘Wig and Pen’ event at the Foreign Correspondent's Club in April and raise our profile amongst the legal and media communities. Thank you to Robertsons and in particular to Mr. Michael Lintern-Smith.

- **World Refugee Day 20th June 2010**

HKRAC is hosting an event the day before World Refugee Day on the 19th June revolving around Crossroads Foundation's Refugee Run. HKRAC will also be raising awareness amongst the Hong Kong community throughout the whole month of June, focusing in particular at secondary school students. We are grateful to the Crossroads Foundation, ISF Academy, Hang Lok Yuen International School, CIS, HKIS, the German Swiss International School, and other institutions for their interest and support.

- **‘Oliver’ production**

There will be an amazing production of the musical ‘Oliver’ in Hong Kong this June, and Producer Ian Robinson and Director Phil Whelan have kindly allowed us to place an editorial within the production program as well as give us an opportunity to raise awareness during the performance evenings.

- **Joint end of year event with Christian Action**

HKRAC has commenced planning a joint fund-raiser at the end of the year with Christian Action. Watch this space for more updates!

We want to convey our deepest thanks to Bernd Rudolph Ebert, Natalie Chen, Paul and Melissa Strecker, Martin Edward Schmidt, Maya and Trudy Nelson, Daniel Sun, Layla Keith, Julie Koo, Jennifer Baldwin, James Clarke, Kenneth Borthwick, Katherine and Andrew Chiu, Christine Bruscheke, and Jonathan Yeap for their generous donations: It is through people like you that refugees can have hope.

Special ‘Thank You’s are also owed to Mari Boman, Melissa Strecker, Lissa Kern, Kat Abrams, Andrea Vidders, Hilary Ohrstrand, Kate Madgwick, Natasha Khan, Natalie Williams, Heidi Shrimpton and Kimberly Li for general help in attaining ‘Wish List’ items, and with grant research and writing, presentations, and events this past month.

We also want to express our gratitude to Graham Newman of NewmanZhang Designs, Denise Wong, Peter Zhou, and Som and Carrie Leung for their assistance in the production of new outreach materials.

Notices

HKRAC is currently recruiting for an IT/Graphic Design Intern to work in Development. Interested candidates should send their CVs to llee@hkrac.org

HKRAC Clinical Legal Education Program

This summer we will be continuing our Clinical Legal Education Program with HKU and CUHK law students. Two students from each university will be working under the supervision of Johime Lee to conduct intakes and provide legal representation and advice to HKRAC clients.

Other News

Facebook

We would like to see more activity on our Facebook page so please 'Like' or 'Become a Fan' of Hong Kong Refugee Advice Centre on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Hong-Kong-Refugee-Advice-Centre/40021039949?ref=ts>). There will be regular updates and please feel free to start discussions on the Page to encourage dialogue.

Staff

HKRAC would like to take this opportunity to welcome our new Interns for the summer: Rebecca Lee-Martyn and Michael Suen, as well as Ari Cohen and David Hattendorf from the Brooklyn Law School and Estelle Hofschneider from the University at Buffalo Law School.

In addition, HKRAC is happy to host a new semester of Law students participating in our Clinical Legal Program:

- Vinca Yau (CUHK)
- Domenic Yang (CUHK)
- Wendy Kwan (HKU)
- Winson Sau Yin Chu (HKU)

Speaking of the Clinics, HKRAC would like to say a massive "Welcome Back!" to Johime Lee who will be overseeing the Clinic this summer.

We at HKRAC would also like to extend our congratulations to Intern Eileen Clarke who got married in April. We wish you and Hans every happiness Eileen!

Finally, HKRAC would like to say thank you and good luck to all the Spring Interns and Legal Clinic students who have finished their courses with HKRAC:

Megan Rodgers, Vivian Cheung, Jolly Xu, Senia Ng, Gabrielle Curtis, Christal Chan, Henry Htang, Petrina Chan, Cathy Lee, Lillian Li, Kitty Ng.

Remember to keep in touch and let us know how you are!

Wish List

HKRAC is the sole dedicated provider of pro bono legal aid to refugees in Hong Kong. Over the past five years, HKRAC has been able to achieve remarkable success due to the support of concerned members of the community.

There are now new and exciting opportunities for community sponsorship. In order to meet growing demand, HKRAC is expanding, and as such we are currently seeking additional office equipment and also new premises. In addition, HKRAC has successfully created an international presence by serving on the Steering Committees of several regional refugee aid networks. In order to maintain our presence and continue our international advocacy activities, HKRAC needs to be able to send staff to regional and international conferences to meet with key stakeholders including national Governments and UNHCR.

If you are able to provide any of the following items, or know of people who would be able to sponsor us, please contact Laura at llee@hkrac.org

- 1) Air Mile points
- 2) Filing Cabinet
- 3) New office premises in Hong Kong/Kowloon
- 4) Hotel accommodation for 2 in Geneva for five nights from 27th June-1st July for the UNHCR Pre-ExCom meeting

We thank you for your support!

World Refugee Day Overview

The 9th Anniversary of World Refugee Day is coming up on 20th June. First established in 2001 on the Golden Jubilee anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention, World Refugee Day is commemorated in over 100 countries by displaced persons, civilians, celebrities, NGOs, government institutions, and multinationals alike to “recognize and applaud the contributions of forcibly displaced people throughout the world” (UNHCR). The unifying theme of this year’s World Refugee Day is:

“Home: ‘They have taken my home but they can’t take my future’”.

In celebration of this date, several exciting events will be taking place around the world.

Cairo, Egypt

The Cairo Refugee Film Festival will be running for a second year to commemorate World Refugee Day. As films are a powerful tool for information dissemination, the goal of the festival is to highlight the valuable contributions made by refugees to Egyptian society. Last year the festival stretched across five days and featured pieces such as A Giraffe in the Rain, Chronicles of a Refugee, and New Year Baby.

Leichhardt, Australia

On the outskirts of Sydney in Leichhardt, the Leichhardt Friends of Hebron are holding a “Festival of Friendship”, which will feature a photography exhibition, a film screening, live music, a forum on censorship, as well as presentations made by West Bank returnees, with the goal of highlighting the plight of Palestinian refugees.

London, United Kingdom

In London, the Umbrella Parade will be taking place. Refugees, asylum seekers, and their supporters will show solidarity in the struggle for secure shelter by marching down London’s streets holding white umbrellas. This march will occur alongside several other umbrella marches across Europe.

Salt Lake City, United States

The Utah State government is holding a World Refugee Education Week in Salt Lake City, which will be headlined by a panel discussion and community discussion, as well as an art gallery stroll.

Hong Kong SAR

In Hong Kong, Christian Action will be hosting a multicultural awareness event at Kowloon Park, featuring food and beverage stalls, activity booths, live performances and presentations by HKRAC’s own Executive Director Brian Barbour and Legal Director Christine Lin. UNHCR will also be hosting a number of events including a dinner concert at Backstage, and a refugee simulation exercise at the Hong Kong Scout Centre.

HKRAC is of course leading with celebrations of our own! This year, HKRAC is working together with Crossroads’ Refugee Run program to raise awareness for the plight of refugees. On Saturday 19th June, attendees will take part in a simulation to experience for themselves the difficulties and dangers faced by fellow human beings in the world today. Please refer to HKRAC’s World Refugee Day event invitation for further information.

HKRAC will also be active throughout the entire month of June to raise awareness, focusing in particular at engaging with Hong Kong’s secondary school students.

Thank you for your support and interest!

Network News

Summary of Alternatives to Detention conference in Seoul

SEOUL, Korea - April 26-28

Civil society organizations participated in a Sub-Regional Roundtable on Alternatives to Detention of Asylum-Seekers and Refugees this past April in Seoul. The tripartite meeting was organized jointly by the Korean Government and UNHCR, and brought together UNHCR and Government representatives from Hong Kong, China, Korea, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. The Roundtable was followed by an East Asia Symposium co-organized by the Japan Association for Refugees, The Refugee P Nan, and the Institute for Legal Studies at Yonsei University.

The International Detention Coalition (IDC) and the East Asia Working Group were able to negotiate meaningful participation by civil society groups from Hong Kong, Japan and South Korea on discussions concerning the detention of asylum seekers and refugees in East Asia. This created a unique space for dialogue between governments and civil society about refugee protection systems in their own countries, which will be followed-up on over the next year.

Summary of the conference in Thailand regarding refugees' mental health

BANGKOK, Thailand – March 2 HKRAC participated in a Regional Consultation on the detention of asylum-seekers and refugees in Bangkok in March. The meeting was the first of its kind and was crucial in starting a dialogue on regional strategies for change for people affected by immigration detention.

Participants identified 6 key themes and priority areas which lay out the plans for developing regional and national actions to engage governments on detention standards, protection issues and release options. Furthermore, UNHCR Headquarters in Geneva is committed to updating their Guidelines on detention and will focus on alternatives. The UNHCR Regional Hub has committed to a number of follow-up initiatives. This includes sub-regional detention training and follow-up consultations to further develop the six themes identified by the participants, with the aim of establishing a regional action plan with timeframes and the implementation of regional, sub-regional and national activities.

Dear HKRAC supporter,

World Refugee Day is coming up! This day of celebration is dedicated to raising awareness for the plight of refugees across the globe, and HKRAC is organizing an event in conjunction with Crossroads Foundation's Refugee Run program on Saturday 19th June 2010.

This will be an exciting opportunity to follow in the footsteps of personalities such as Tony Tyler, CEO of Cathay Pacific, and Steve Marcapoto, President of Turner Broadcasting Asia in experiencing what it would be like to be a refugee. Participants of the Refugee Run will face simulated attacks, mine fields where they may be 'injured', life in a refugee camp, corruption, and uncertain shelter or safety. Participants may also be marched under guard, subjected to ambush and ultimately offered a chance of resettlement where they must rebuild their lives.

HKRAC would like to invite you to participate in our World Refugee Day event. Details are as follows;

Event: World Refugee Day
Venue: Crossroads Refugee Run at Gold Coast, Hong Kong
Date: Saturday 19th June 2010
Time: 9.15am – 3.00pm
Pick-up point: Harbour View Street, HK MTR station exit D, IFC, Central
Drop-off Point: Jordan Road, Jordan
Cost: HKD 250 (includes transportation, participation fee and lunch)

Participants will be picked up at Central at 9.15am sharp and taken by coach to the Crossroads facilities at Gold Coast. The Refugee Run will last approximately two hours, after which attendees will enjoy a tasty Nepalese cuisine lunch at Kangan Restaurant near the HKRAC office in Jordan.

Please confirm your attendance by **Monday 7th June** by completing the attached form below and sending it to the HKRAC office along with a cash sum or cheque for HKD \$250. Please note that places are extremely limited and the fee of HKD 250 is non-refundable.

For further information on World Refugee Day and on the Crossroads Refugee Run please visit <http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/refugee/> and <http://www.crossroads.org.hk/> respectively.

This is guaranteed to be a once-in-a-lifetime experience and we are extremely excited to share this with you.

Looking forward to seeing you on the 19th!

The HKRAC team

The Hong Kong Refugee Advice Centre Ltd

World Refugee Day 2010

I, will be attending HKRAC's World Refugee Day event at Crossroads on Saturday 19th June 2010.

I want to book spaces.

I enclose with this form a cheque/cash for HKD \$250.00 per person.

I am also including a donation of

Contact phone number:

Contact email:

Company:

Please send this completed form along with the HKD \$250 participation fee to:

Hong Kong Refugee Advice Centre Ltd.

2 Jordan Road,

Room 2, G/FI

Kowloon

Please note on the envelope cover: Attn - Laura Lee, World Refugee Day

Thank you!