



DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

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CASEWORK UPDATE JANUARY 2010 – DECEMBER 2010

HKRAC experienced a landmark year of success in 2010! We are ecstatic to report that the approval rate for our refugee clients at UNHCR is between 70-80%! This is especially remarkable since the rate of approval for refugees without legal counsel has dropped to around 3%. Our work is changing lives and YOU are making this possible!

Specifically, HKRAC provided full representation to 65 refugee claimants and customized or limited legal representation to hundreds more in 2010. UNHCR has already recognized 24 of our refugee clients, with many more cases still pending. Notably, UNHCR re-opened four previously closed cases. Some recent successes include:

- *On October 22, 2010, UNHCR recognized a refugee from the Middle East, who was represented at his First Instance interview by Andrew Lillis.*
- *On November 2, 2010, UNHCR recognized a refugee from South Asia. HKRAC's summer legal intern, Estelle Hofschneider, and Refugee Advisor Johime Lee provided representation at his interviews.*
- *On November 30, 2010, an African client's case was re-opened. Thanks to Rachel Lu at Latham & Watkins for her hard work on this case.*
- *On December 14, 2010, UNHCR recognized four African clients. Thai MacDonald from Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer and Lindsay Ernst, Head of Clinical Programmes, provided representation in these cases.*

A very special thank you is owed to Linklaters and Jelita Pandjaitan in particular for generously donating pro bono translation services. This donation has allowed us to assist more people.

A massive thank you to all of HKRAC's interpreters, volunteer caseworkers and *pro bono* lawyers. Without you, our success would not be possible!

General Casework News

Increase in Casework Capacity and Efficiency

This year, we represented many more refugee claimants! We also streamlined our systems to be more efficient and to better manage expectations of refugee claimants.

Access to Registration Interviews

UNHCR HK allowed legal representatives to attend refugee registration interviews in 2010. This has been crucial toward ensuring procedural fairness in the Refugee Status Determination process since legal representatives can generate a transcript of the registration interview. What a difference a year makes!

Bi-Monthly UNHCR-NGO Coordination Meetings

HKRAC participates in collaborative bi-monthly UNHCR/NGO meetings that discuss issues facing asylum seekers and refugees and identify gaps in assistance in Hong Kong.

Participation in the Age, Gender, Diversity Mainstreaming Exercise

UNHCR invited HKRAC to participate in the Age, Gender & Diversity Mainstreaming Exercise on November 10-12, 2010. We visited a juvenile shelter, conducted home visits of asylum seekers, and held focus groups with asylum seekers and refugees to discuss their concerns.

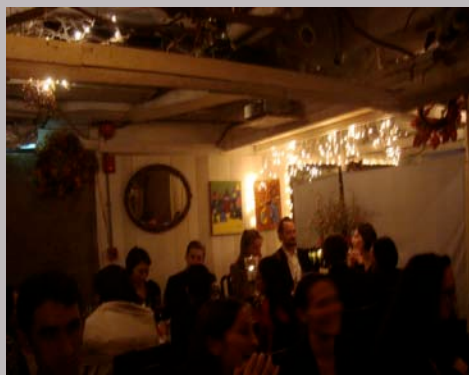
Development News

It has been an exciting two months indeed!

HKRAC has been awarded HK \$620,000 from Goldman Sachs! HKRAC previously collaborated on multiple Goldman Community Teamworks projects, so we are excited to see our relationship with Goldman Sachs develop further. The money will be used to increase the number of refugees we assist and improve interpretation services in Hong Kong. A sincere “thank you” is owed to Goldman Sachs and HKRAC supporter and volunteer Amy Lee in particular for promoting HKRAC’s mission!

We are also grateful to **Anne Marden** and **The Marden Foundation** for funding HKRAC’s 2011 Translation and Interpretation Training Project. The Marden Foundation initially supported HKRAC in 2008, and the new funds will further develop Hong Kong’s interpretation services to refugees and asylum-seekers.

We are pleased to announce that all five of our original law firm partners have renewed their partnerships with HKRAC in 2011. Thank you to Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer; Latham & Watkins; Linklaters; Shearman & Sterling; and Skadden Arps Slate Meagher & Flom for your unstinting dedication and continued leadership. We also warmly welcome new law firm partner Mallesons Stephen Jaques to the HKRAC family. All our law firms were invited to celebrate a Christmas dinner with HKRAC staff and board earlier this month. It was a special evening!



HKRAC would like to extend a big thank you to the Student Refugee Aid Group at the Chinese International School. Led by students Charis Kong, Pei Jing Chung, Joyce Au, Mung Lok Wong, and assisted by Kristina Li, the Group organized a Refugee Aid Week at their school with presentations and several fundraising events in support of HKRAC. Well done to you all, and thank you!



HKRAC would like to thank the Amnesty International Club at the Canadian International School, and also to the West Island School for inviting us to present our refugee cause at their schools in November. You were great and we look forward to working together to save lives!

Finally, a big thank you to everyone who has funded us in 2010. Your generosity has enabled us to exponentially expand our capacity this year, and we will continue to grow and serve a larger number of refugees in 2011 with your support.

HKRAC is in desperate need of new computers, and donations of good quality laptops and desktop computers would be greatly appreciated. Please contact the HKRAC office at (852) 3109 7359 if you would like to sponsor computers for us this Christmas season.

Network News

Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network

Civil society organizations from over a dozen nations converged on Bangkok on November 24-27, 2010 to participate in the 3rd annual Asia Pacific Consultation on Refugee Rights. Three representatives from HKRAC were able to participate in this important conference due to a generous donation from the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy.

The theme of this year's conference was: "Strengthening Local Effectiveness Together". Issues discussed included: "Working with UN Agencies and Other Stakeholders on Statelessness", "Perspectives on 'Durable Solutions'", and "Fundraising Effectively".

Congratulations to our very own Executive Director Brian Barbour and Legal Director Christine Lin, who were both re-elected as Chair and Vice-Chair of their respective working groups. HKRAC will also serve on the APRRN Steering Committee for another year.



Korea-Hong Kong Training Programme Exchange

Korean and Hong Kong civil society organizations coordinated an intensive training programme on refugee rights in Seoul.

The Dongcheon Foundation, HKRAC, and UNHCR Korea originally met at a Symposium on Alternatives to Detention in April earlier this year. The collaboration continued with a Refugee Legal Aid Training and Empowerment (ReLATE) programme in Korea for Korean lawyers.

UNHCR took advantage of HKRAC's presence in Korea for the ReLATE Training to organize a workshop for newly appointed first-instance adjudicators in the Korean Immigration Service. HKRAC provided training which focused on practical skills through case studies.

Team News

HKRAC bids Casework Intern Tal Gory farewell this month as his internship with us draws to a close. Thank you for your hard work Tal, and do keep in touch!

Johime Lee who, as always, generously stepped in to cover staff shortfall, will be leaving Hong Kong in the Spring of 2011. Best of luck Johime, and thanks for always helping us when we most need it!

Good luck and goodbye also to our Fall semester Clinic students: Tony Leung, Leanne Tse, Irene Lam, Alex Lo, Alex Wan, Philip Cheng, Jenny Ho, Lorraine Cheng, Jessie Wang, Ariel Wong, Denise Souza and Yvonne Ngai. We will miss you around the office.

Welcome to our new interns from the University of New South Wales: Anita Wise, Maria Nawaz, Mandy Lam and Tristan Harley. We are excited to have you and look forward to working together.

HKRAC is also pleased to announce that two new Staff Attorneys will be joining our team in January. A warm welcome to Stephanie Jones and Angela Edman!

Vacancies

HKRAC Seeks Interpreters

HKRAC is in need of Amharic, Arabic, Ewe, Pashto, Somali, Singhalese, Tamil, and Tigrinya interpreters.

Interpreters must possess the following qualifications:

- Oral fluency in both English and the language of interpretation
- Sensitivity towards working with asylum seekers and victims of trauma and torture
- Ability to interpret in an impartial manner
- Ability to maintain all interpretations confidential
- Availability weekdays between 9:00 am – 6:00 pm
- Proof of work authorization or permission to volunteer in Hong Kong

Please send your statement of interest and CV to info@hkrac.org.

Summer 2011 Casework Intern

We are seeking a casework intern to begin in May/June 2011. The casework intern should have a strong interest in and commitment to human rights and excellent research, writing and oral communication skills. The casework intern will conduct intake interviews with potential refugee clients and write interview-based reports with extensive country of origin research. Other responsibilities may include taking the testimony of a client; drafting legal submissions; providing self-representation advice; assisting staff with legal and factual research; 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 torture victims preferred but not required.
- Fluency in Arabic, Dari, Ewe, French, Hindi, Lingala, Lugandan, Mongolian, Pashto, Punjabi, Sinhalese, Somali, Swahili, Punjabi, Tamil, Urdu or other languages preferred.

To apply, email statement of interest, CV, and legal writing sample to Christine Lin at clin@hkrac.org by 1 February 2011.

HKRAC Halloween Social

HKRAC's "Nightmare on Graham Street" Halloween bash was a spooky success with over 60 guests partying the night away at The Globe on Graham Street. Prizes were presented to the two best costumes, and Brian Barbour's 'The Nightmare Before Christmas' and Amy Lee's 'Kick-Ass' won hands down.

We would like to say massive thank you to all those who attended, and to Toby Cooper and his team at The Globe for their support.



**HAPPY HOLIDAYS
FROM THE HKRAC TEAM!!
SEE YOU IN 2011!!**