



HUMANIST CANADA

July 20, 2019



Greetings!

Almost a month ago I traveled to Reykjavik, Iceland, to take part in the Young Humanists International General Assembly, European Humanist Federation General Assembly, Siðmennt - Icelandic Ethical Humanist Association international conference and Humanists International General Assembly.

Taking part was a truly lovely experience and time to see humanists from around the world, whether long-time presidents or organizational representatives, or the new representatives of freshly founded groups, Iceland had a lot of leading humanists present at the meeting. In the midst of the entire meeting, we heard from the President of Iceland, the President of Humanists International, and many more.

There were presentations, speeches, elections, approval of new organizations, and lots, and lots, of photos taken for the event. I would highly recommend attending an International Humanist event to experience first hand the energy of the world's humanist movement. [Check out the photos](#)

Regards,
Scott Jacobsen
Newsletter Editor, Humanist Canada



Behind the scenes

This is a new monthly series to share what's happening behind the scenes at Humanist Canada and what we are working on.

As always, your feedback is welcome on any our initiatives. We hope you like this first installment.

Position Statements - Stay tuned...

Humanist Canada is developing a series of position statements. As an organization oriented around compassion, reason, and science, Humanist Canada

aims for the inclusion of general subject matter and concerns of interest to the humanist public in Canadian society. Those who trust in the work of Humanist Canada to uphold values enshrined in international and national human rights documents or the advancement of science and evidence-based policy making.



Beginning in September, we will be soliciting feedback on various subject matter including reproductive rights with an emphasis on women's rights incorporating abortion, freedom of expression, Indigenous rights, science and matters of scientific fact and methodology, sexual orientation and gender identity minority rights, and so on. These would be one-page general position statements on topics for the Humanist Canada community. We highly encourage feedback from members, so please stay tuned.

Quebec's Secularism Law - Bill 21

On June 16, 2019, Quebec's government passed a polarizing bill that will see religious symbols disappear in most of the public sector.

The bill declares the law will have effect 'notwithstanding' protections in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

"Denying the rights of one group of people puts everyone's rights at risk... Quebec's proposed law runs counter to the fundamental principles of equality, dignity and respect." *Marie-Claude Landry, Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission*

[See Canadian Human Rights Commission](#)

Given your understanding of Bill 21, do you support the legislation?

Yes

Select

No

Select

Undecided

Select



World Humanist Congress August 6-9, 2020 Miami

The upcoming World Humanist Congress will be held in Miami next year, organized by the American Humanist Association. The theme will be "Beyond Borders: Our Global Humanist Culture." **Registration for the 2020 congress opens on October 1, 2019.**

Urgent Action Required - Gulalai Ismail

Humanist Canada continues to join a growing chorus of denunciation of the Government of Pakistan in its treatment of human rights campaigner Gulalai Ismail, including Humanists International and other human rights groups.



Gulalai Ismail is the Chairperson of Aware Girls and the Seeds of Peace network, who was recently charged with "sedition" under terrorism laws. This is clearly a manufactured charge aimed at silencing an essential voice for justice and human rights. Gulalai was campaigning for justice in the case of a girl who was raped and murdered.

According to confirmed reports, her family have faced repeated harassment and intimidation by the security forces in Pakistan.

With the continual spate of issues facing human rights activists around the world, specifically humanists, the reduction in the number of national blasphemy laws becomes an integral part of the work of Humanists International.

We urge Humanist Canada members, the Canadian public and the international freethought community to email the Pakistani embassy in Ottawa to denounce the Government of Pakistan's treatment of human rights campaigner Gulalai Ismail at parepottawa@rogers.com.

Human rights defenders and campaigners fight for the rights of others. Often, this comes with risks to themselves, and they need defenders too.

[Read Humanist Canada's call to Action](#)



HI Blog

To stay up-to-date on International Humanist Activities, you may want to bookmark Humanists International Blog, which features members news and campaign updates in our International community.

This month includes a story of members of the Humanist Society Pakistan who wanted to celebrate World Humanist Day on 21 June but had to in secret because of the risk of the death penalty for the slightest suspicion of atheism. [Check it out!](#)

"Humanists At Risk" Fundraising Appeal

This is an annual crowd-funding appeal to help humanists most in danger. The funding is just entering into the double digit amounts now. [Click to Donate.](#)



[Tell us what you'd like to see in the Newsletter.](#)



To ensure the newsletter is relevant we invite your response to a few short questions. Having feedback from across the country is our goal. [Click here!](#)

Why membership in Humanist Canada is important!

We simply can't do it without you. We are entirely funded through memberships and donations. Your involvement is incredibly significant and goes a long way to support lasting change for a better society and a tolerant world where rational thinking and kindness prevail.

Your membership status/expiry date is on **--if no expiry date, contact the national office--** (M/D/Y). If it's time for you to renew, just click on your personal link below, confirm your information and make your payment today.

Click here: http://weblink.donorperfect.com/humanistcanada_join

If you have any questions about renewing, please contact the National Office at members@humanistcanada.ca or 1-877-486-2671.