ICOPA Renewal and Visioning Exercise

The International Conference on Penal Abolition (ICOPA) is a bi-annual gathering of activists, academics, journalists, practitioners, people currently or formerly imprisoned, survivors of state and personal harm, and others from across the world who are working towards the abolition of imprisonment, the penal system, carceral controls and the prison industrial complex.

Since 1983, ICOPA participants have come together to discuss what is to be abolished, how is abolition to be achieved, and what alternative relations can be created to address the issues that are currently criminalized and punished. The next conference – ICOPA 15 – is being held on Algonquin Territory / in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada at the University of Ottawa from June 13 to 15, 2014.

**Building Awareness, Developing Strategy, Taking Action**

In the lead-up to ICOPA 15 we are initiating a conversation about how to build upon the legacy of this unique global conference and chart a renewed vision that speaks to the concerns of those engaged in abolitionist struggles and their allies. Abolitionists from around the world are encouraged to engage their networks and hold discussions to:

1) Identify who is engaged in abolitionist work in their local community, region and nation state;
2) Document the issues that are the focus of their related thoughts and actions; and
3) Describe what role they would envision for an international abolitionist forum, and what they would hope to gain and share by taking part in such a network.

In holding these conversations we encourage submission of pieces that summarize these discussions in the form of art, film, music, interviews, photography, plays, poetry, short stories, spiritual and healing activities, essays, papers, reports, proposals for ICOPA policy positions and resolutions, and everything in between.

As submissions are received they will be posted on actionicopa.org and circulated using social media networks (e.g. Facebook, Twitter and YouTube) to stimulate our on-going dialogue on the future of this international abolitionist forum. The submissions will also be summarized in our bi-monthly newsletter that is available on our website and is mailed to our imprisoned allies.

*Be a part of the discussion.*

*Initiate a conversation.*

*Share your vision of what ICOPA can be.*