

MARCH 2014 ACTIONICOPA.ORG UPDATE

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**NEXT UPDATE:
APRIL 2014**

RESISTING CARCERAL NATION STATES: THE FIFTEENTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PENAL ABOLITION (ICOPA 15)

JUNE 13 - 15, 2014

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA
ALGONQUIN TERRITORY / OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA

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BUILDING AWARENESS, DEVELOPING STRATEGY, TAKING ACTION

CONFERENCE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

When we began our work, the local organizing committee for the *Fifteenth International Conference on Penal Abolition* (ICOPA 15) sought to put lived experiences of state repression, its impacts on Indigenous communities, people of colour and women, and solidarity and resistance work at the forefront of the agenda. We are extremely pleased with the response and look forward to welcoming participants from across the white settler colonial state of Canada and around the world to this event beginning with an opening ceremony led by Albert Dumont – a local spiritual advisor, and traditional teacher and mediation facilitator – and Chief Gilbert Whiteduck of the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg Band. We are confident that the conference will build awareness about current manifestations of state violence and provide an opportunity to develop strategies to work towards social justice and peace.

As shown on page 2, the main thrust of the conference will be panels of presentations and workshops. ICOPA 15 will feature contributions from many prisoners (see page 3) and academics, as well as individuals from the following organizations: *Journal of Prisoners on Prisons*, Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies, National Jericho Movement, Prisoner Strike Solidarity Network, The Prisoner Correspondence Project, Critical Resistance, Supporting Ourselves while Supporting Our Loved Ones (S.O.S.O.L.O.), Justice for Hassan Diab, Justice for Mohammed Harkat Committee, Stop Canadian Involvement in Torture, Black Daddies Club, Sisters Inside, Norwegian Association for Penal Reform (KROM), Coalition Against Psychiatric Assault, Families of Sisters in Spirit, Tears 4 Justice, Prison TV, Quakers Fostering Justice, CKUT, Hulsman Foundation, No One is Illegal Ottawa, Termite Collective, Campaign Against Torture and Ill-treatment in Prison, Insurgent Theatre, Justice for Deepan, Justice & Honour for Muhammed Silah, End the Prison Industrial Complex (EPIC), Red Bird Prison Abolition, Criminalization and Punishment Education Project (CPEP), Maison Crossroads, Prison Policy Initiative, Decarcerate PA, Everyday Abolition | Abolition Everyday, Life After Life Collective, No One Is Illegal Toronto, and the End Immigration Detention Network.

Art will also feature prominently in the program, beginning with the “Artists for Justice: Open-stage and Art Exhibition” being held on June 12 before the official conference begins. There will also be a performance of “Jailhouse Blues” by Faith Nolan on June 13, as well as the screening of “The Secret Trial 5” also on June 13 and “The Shadow of Lucasville” on June 14. Political engagement will also be part of the conference, with No One Is Illegal Toronto, the End Immigration Detention Network and other allies organizing a public action on June 15.

	Presentation Panels	Workshops
Day 1	<p>Experiences of Criminalized and Incarcerated Women</p> <p>Hearing Voices: Using the Penal Press to Counter Dominant Discourses</p> <p>Imprisonment and the Canadian Carceral State</p> <p>Impacts of Incarceration on the Families and Loved Ones of the Criminalized</p> <p>The Violence of Incarceration</p> <p>Prisons Without Bars: Racism, Torture, Secret Trials, Indefinite Detentions</p> <p>Race, Life and Death in Prisons</p>	<p>What Does Solidarity Look Like? A Discussion About Organizing Strategies</p> <p>Queer & Trans Prison Penal-Pal Project Roundtable</p> <p>Resisting the War on Gangs: Inside and Outside</p> <p>Grounding with My Brothers: Stories from the Margin</p>
Day 2	<p>Disability Incarcerated: The Interface of Imprisonment and Disability</p> <p>Colonization, Racism, Resistance and Criminalization I</p> <p>Perspectives from Canada</p> <p>Education and Incarceration</p> <p>Colonization, Racism, Resistance and Criminalization II</p> <p>International Perspectives I</p> <p>Isolation and Deaths in Custody</p> <p>International Perspectives II</p> <p>Leadership, Resistance and Isolation</p> <p>Racism and Deportation in Ontario</p>	<p>Prison TV: On Freedom of Expression and Media Censorship</p> <p>Prison Radio: On Media, Prisoners and Prison Issues</p> <p>No One is Illegal: Struggles From Ottawa and Beyond</p> <p>Parole Sans Parole: The Prequel, The Sequel and Everything in Between</p> <p>Research for Action: Dialogue on Using Skills and Knowledge to Further Social Justice Movements</p> <p>Stay Dangerous: The Role of Abolition in Prisoner Resistance</p>
Day 3	<p>Experiences and Critiques of Mass Incarceration in the Golden State / Gulag</p> <p>How to Respond to the Needs of the 'Dangerous Few'?</p> <p>Reform and Abolition</p> <p>Restorative, Transformative and Social Justice</p> <p>Researching and Resisting Carceral Nation States</p>	<p>Decarceration as a Strategy for Coalition Building and Abolition</p> <p>Everyday Abolition Abolition Everyday: Stories of and Art of Everyday Resistance to the PIC</p> <p>Transformative Justice 101: Confronting Interpersonal Violence without the Cops or the Courts</p>

BUILDING AWARENESS AND SUPPORTING PRISONERS' STRUGGLES

In the first ICOPA 15 newsletter update sent out in March 2013, prisoners were encouraged to contribute ideas on how to the organization can support prisoners' struggles initiatives, as well as encourage "exiled voices" to participate and actively shape discussions related to the abolition of prisons, the penal system, carceral controls, and the prison-industrial-complex. Two initiatives have sprung from this call for contributions.

First, there will be five sessions organized by the *Journal of Prisoners on Prisons* featuring papers written by current prisoners including: Cathy Marston, Jennifer Gann, Jarrod Shook, Jose Vivar, Peter Collins, Neil N. Shah, Jerry Lashuay, Victor Becerra, Derrick Tucker, Benito Gutierrez, James Bauhaus, Kenneth E. Hartmann, Harry C. Goodall, Forrest Lee Jones, Dortell Williams, Kevin D. Sawyer, Tiyo Attalah Salah-El, Jon Marc Taylor, Bobby Joe Smith III, Shawn Fisher and Joe Convict. These papers will be presented on Day 1 and Day 3 of the event to inform conference participants on the issues facing, and trends impacting, incarceration persons today.

Second, a booklet of suggestions on how ICOPA can support prisoners and their initiatives will be compiled and circulated on ICOPA's website, as well as to conference presenters and participants for discussion during the closing plenary. This booklet will include submissions submitted by prisoners that were summarized in the May 2013 newsletter update including: Peter Collins, Dortell Williams, Chas Ransome, Richard Hall, Kerry Shakaboona Marshall, Craig Minogue, Cathy Marston, Tiyo Attalah Salah-El and Jon Marc Taylor. If you wish to make contributions to the booklet, please submit them to the address below by May 15, 2014. To keep this discussion going and move initiatives forward following ICOPA 15, the July newsletter update will summarize the deliberations and concrete steps that conference participants agreed to take in response to proposals discussed during the closing plenary.

CONTACT

To get a copy of the full ICOPA 15 program or other conference related information, please direct all correspondence by email to icopa.canada@gmail.com or by mail to:

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