



**5th RENDEZ-VOUS INTERNATIONAL DES JEUNES 2007
THE WORKPLACE: RACISM-FREE ZONE**

March 16 – 23, 2007, Montreal

Centre de recherche de Montréal sur les inégalités sociales et les discriminations (CREMIS)
1250 Sanguinet, Room 461

Montreal, March 16, 2007 – The Centre de recherche de Montréal sur les inégalités sociales, les discriminations et les pratiques alternatives de citoyenneté (CREMIS) and Images Interculturelles present, as part of the 8th Action Week Against Racism, the 5th **Rendez-vous international des jeunes, March 16-23, 2007 in Montreal.**

Since 2003, between 25 and 30 young people from different countries, concerned about issues of discrimination, racial profiling and ghettoization and actively involved in the struggle against racism in their lives and workplaces, meet once a year in Montreal for the **Rendez-vous international des jeunes** (RDVJ) to identify strategies for action. These meetings have led to the drafting of some 100 recommendations for the struggle against racism, presented to the government of Quebec and the United Nations Special Rapporteur (2004). Participants have also made radio productions (2005) and developed a Toolbox (2006) for the creation of “Racism-Free Zones”. Every year, links are forged between new and former participants that lead to a range of initiatives, such as the website created by 2004 RDJ participants.

This 5th RDVJ brings together 30 francophones, aged 18 to 35, from Quebec, France, the French Community of Belgium, Armenia, Finland, Romania, Lithuania and Monaco around the theme *The Workplace: Racism-Free Zone*. They will take part in numerous workshops and plenary sessions, as well as a seminar/debate on the role of social statistics in relation to racism and work, with sociology professors Stéphane Moulin and Sirma Bilge and sociology students from the Université de Montréal, on Tuesday, March 20 from 4 pm to 7 pm. The RDJ ends Friday, March 23rd, when participants present the results of their reflection, witnessing, analysis and action priorities.

“With the RDVJ, we want to generate public debate around the issue of *Racism at Work* and to reflect the initiative of citizens who refuse to accept racist practices as normal,” says RDVJ co-organizer and CRÉMIS director Christopher McAll. “The struggle against racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance in Canada is far from won, and it is a struggle that affects young people especially.”

THE RENDEZ-VOUS DES JEUNES is organized by a team of partners that includes the Centre de recherche de Montréal sur les inégalités sociales et les discriminations (CREMIS), Images Interculturelles/Inforacisme.com, the Office franco-québécois de la jeunesse, and the Agence Québec-Wallonie-Bruxelles pour la jeunesse.

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Source: Images Interculturelles – Action Week Against Racism
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EMPLOYMENT, WORK AND RACISM

Racism pretends that the discriminatory treatment reserved for certain segments of the population is justified by their “natural inferiority” or “inferior culture”. This thinking erases power relations and the self-interest of the powerful, which throughout history have relegated some people to the fringes of society, either excluding them from the privileges reserved to the powerful, or forcing them to provide services. National job markets are characterized by carefully constructed and maintained “reserved” areas of employment, but also by the abusive appropriation of the production of immigrant workers having a minority status at the bottom of the ladder.

The bottom of the ladder also extends, of course, to all the people living outside the rich countries who are put to work to produce goods and services intended for those countries. In the division of labour, or the appropriation of the labour of others - in both ancient and contemporary forms, racism is one of the key mechanisms used to “explain” the inequalities and justify the discriminatory acts necessary to enact them. “So one of the main issues in the struggle against racism and discrimination is the exploitation of others’ work, as well as the maintaining of barriers around work that is more dignified, more worthwhile and better paid. At previous meetings, the question of racism and its relationship to employment has always been at the centre of our discussions,” says Christopher McAll, co-organizer of the 2007 RDJ.

The youth will meet in small groups and produce a document for the March 23 event explaining what they are asking for, their opinions, first-hand accounts of their experiences, and interviews. They will also prepare a performance piece (theatre forum) and a series of photos, videos and audio clips.