



Launch of the  
9<sup>th</sup> Action Week Against Racism  
"FULLY HUMAN: YOUTH IN THE CITY"  
Montreal • Quebec • Brussels

Montreal, Thursday, March 20, 2008 – Coordinated by Images Interculturelles in partnership with the Offices jeunesse internationaux du Québec (OJIQ), the Conseil des relations interculturelles and the Tolerance Foundation, the **Action Week Against Racism (AWAR)** has been, since March 2000, one of the year's not-to-be-missed events, an annual gathering where the realities of racism and intolerance in our societies are openly acknowledged and discussed.

The **Opening Ceremony of the 9<sup>th</sup> Action Week Against Racism** took place **Thursday, March 20, 2008**. On hand were AWAR's national, international and Montreal partners. Speakers included **Emmanuel Dubourg**, Member for Viau, Québec Liberal Party; **Alix Laurent**, co-founder of AWAR and Images Interculturelles / Inforacisme; **Marcel Tremblay**, head of intercultural relations at the City of Montreal; **Patricia Rimok**, Chair of the Conseil des relations interculturelles; and **Alfred Pilon**, Secretary-General of the Offices Jeunesse Internationaux du Québec (OJIQ). They were joined by the group **Deya**, comic and human jukebox **Charlie Pop**, and singer **Lynda Thalie** who drew on her Algerian roots to add to the festivities.

"Youth as legitimate members of society, with the right to express themselves freely, to be and become what they want – that is the essence of the theme we chose for the 9th Action Week," said AWAR organizers. "Today's youth will shape tomorrow's world. They will enforce the decisions made today and the attitudes and teachings they're given now. They have the right to be treated as though they belong: the right to be downtown without being hassled, the right to an education, to spaces to play and make art, and to jobs that respect their hopes for the future. They have a right to be part of planning and building civil society."

AWAR 2008 has organized some 50 activities in Montreal and Quebec City including public lectures, discussions, performances and exhibits. Events include the much anticipated 3<sup>rd</sup> **Montreal Human Rights Film Festival** (March 27 - April 3, [www.ffdpm.com](http://www.ffdpm.com)) with some 60 films from more than 20 countries at the Cinema du Parc and the NFB Cinema. The 6<sup>th</sup> **International Youth Meeting** brings together some 30 Francophones ages 18 to 35 from Quebec and France (March 27 - April 4). A new **CineJeunesse** will hold screenings in elementary and secondary schools (March 25-28, 31) and will partner this year with Radio Canada International to present the best short films in the RCI-sponsored contest **CineJeunesse Special: Generation DX2** at the Maison de la Culture Frontenac (Friday, March 28, 10 am). The eclectic **Solidarythmé** (Saturday, April 5, 7 pm, SAT) features an evening of music and live art, while the Segal Centre for Performing Arts brings back **No More Raisins, No More Almonds**, on stage March 24-26. Two major public lectures are scheduled: **Lutter contre le racisme et la discrimination en Europe** with Isil Gachet, Executive Secretary to the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (Wednesday, March 19, 6:30 pm, UQÀM, Salle Marie-Gérin-Lajoie); and **Réflexion sur la Politique québécoise de lutte contre le racisme et la discrimination** (Tuesday, March 25, 1:30 pm). See

full program details at [www.inforacisme.com](http://www.inforacisme.com)

AWAR began in March 2000 as an initiative of five Quebec organizations. It is one of many events marking the United Nations *International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination* on March 21. The **Action Week Against Racism** is an opportunity for reflection, sharing ideas, raising awareness and cross-cultural exchange.

- 30 -

**MEDIA: MARIE MARAIS, PRESS OFFICER**

**(514) 845-2821 / [MARAIS@COOPTEL.QC.CA](mailto:MARAIS@COOPTEL.QC.CA)**

**Program, high-resolution images: [www.inforacisme.com](http://www.inforacisme.com) / General info: (514) 842-7127**