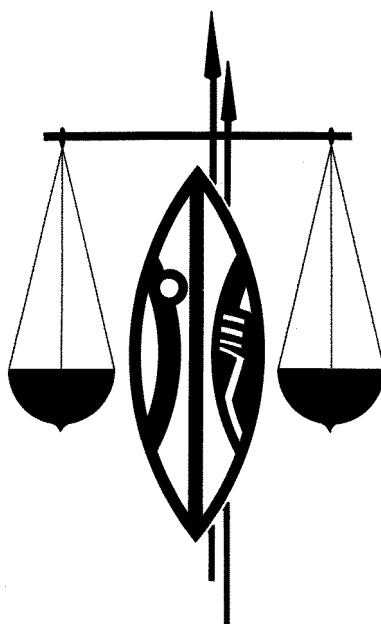


# **AFRICAN CANADIAN LEGAL CLINIC**



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**2003  
ANNUAL REPORT**

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September 23, 2003

Dear ACLC Members:

The Board of Directors of the African Canadian Legal Clinic (ACLC) extends heartfelt thanks to all who have supported our work over the past year.

The African Canadian Legal Clinic (ACLC) is dedicated to addressing anti-Black racism in Canada and we continue to make headways in addressing systemic racism. The ACLC is committed to furthering the principals of employment equity. This is highlighted in our ongoing case involving high school teachers and the promotional process.

The ACLC continues to work in the field of social development by providing a forum for the community to raise and discuss social justice issues. A significant part of our work this year has been dedicated to helping quite a number of families who encounter problems with the Safe Schools provision of the *Education Act*. Our staff continue to respond to calls from across Ontario to deal with this serious issue.

I would like to thank all Board members, staff, volunteers, members of the Clinic and members of the wider community, for their commitment and dedication to the work and mission of our unique organization. In a time when social services are under attack, the work of the ACLC becomes even more relevant and essential as we help those who continue to be marginalized in our community.

As we acknowledge the support of our members over the last year and look forward to your advice and continued support as we move forward with the work of the ACLC.

Yours truly,

Mrs. Eyitayo Dada  
Chair, Board of Directors

# ***LEGAL REPORT***

## ***R. v. D. Brown (Racial Profiling/ Judicial Bias)***

The ACLC intervened at the Ontario Court of Appeal in the landmark racial profiling case of Dee Brown. At the appeal of this classic “Driving While Black” case, the Crown made the following statement:

We are not disputing, we do not challenge the existence of racial profiling by the police. The courts have indicated, this court has taken judicial notice of anti-Black racism. The issue of racial profiling, we do not dispute that. That phenomenon exists. There is significant social science evidence. The Commission on Systemic Racism in the Criminal Justice System in Ontario, supports that conclusion. It is apparent that young Black men fitting the description of Mr. Brown are statistically most vulnerable to Racial Profiling. This is a problem that merits action.

In its high profile decision, the Ontario Court of Appeal found that this concession was a reasonable one, given the existing social science evidence. The Court found that since it is so difficult to “prove” racial profiling, a circumstantial, inferential approach should be applied. The Court also found that the manner, in which the trial judge had dealt with Mr. Brown and his counsel when they raised the issue of racial profiling by the police, left a reasonable observer with an apprehension of bias on the part of the Judge.

## ***F.O. v. Toronto District School Board (Employment Equity)***

The ACLC continues in its representation of an African Canadian teacher who, despite years of experience and extensive qualifications, was not successful in gaining a departmental promotion at the former Scarborough Board of Education. The ACLC and the Commission have presented their systemic witnesses to the Human Rights Tribunal. These witnesses include an equity advisor, policy witnesses, a sociologist and an expert who conducted the employment equity review in Scarborough at the relevant time. This case has spanned over one hundred hearing days. The ACLC will seek remedies designed to eliminate barriers for African Canadian teachers in the promotional process and that raise awareness of the issue of under-representation of African Canadians in positions of responsibility.

***Odhayji Estate et. al. v. Woodhouse et. al.***  
**(Breach of Public Office)**

The ACLC awaits the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in this case involving police accountability in tort for breach of public office. The ACLC intervened to support the ability of those who face losses to sue police for such things as failing to co-operate with independent investigators. In this case, a young South Asian man was killed by the police. The family claimed that the police abused their legal duty to co-operate with the Special Investigations Unit, using delay, collaboration and other evasive tactics. The ACLC argued that the tort must cover abuse of duties to ensure that African Canadians have effective means of redressing and deterring abuses by public authorities, such as the police.

***Safe Schools***

The ACLC is about to launch three judicial reviews of unfair school board practices with the assistance of the Clinic Services Offices Barrister Service. With the CSO Barrister, Kate Stephenson, the ACLC will attack school practices in suspension and expulsions, such as, improper and late disclosure, failure to hear the child's story, bias, the insistence that the parent present evidence first, failure to allow cross examination of witnesses and other breaches of natural justice.

The ACLC was successful in obtaining a ruling from School Trustees in one case, where the school was ordered to present its case prior to that of the parents. This is critical because it provides the parent and child with an opportunity to meet the case against the child.

Over the past year the ACLC has been involved in several suspension and expulsion Hearings of African Canadian students. The ACLC continues to advocate for children and youth in the suspension and expulsion processes and to research the issue of "Zero Tolerance".

***Law School Tuition***

Two Human Rights complaints are proceeding against two Ontario law schools (at York and the University of Toronto) regarding the existing tuition fees. The ACLC is counsel for the complainants and is working closely with Black students groups. The University of Toronto, despite the complaint and pressure from numerous groups including the ACLC has confirmed a plan to raise tuition to \$22,000.00 over the next five years. The ACLC anticipates that the human

rights claims will be investigated by the Ontario Human Rights Commission over the course of the next six months.

### ***Intake/ Advice Services***

The ACLC would like to thank Lisa LaBorde for all her good work as Advice Lawyer. Lisa was Advice Lawyer from May 2002 to July 2003. Her advocacy helped make a difference for many clients, particularly young students, their parents and foreign-trained teachers. We wish Lisa all the best and good luck for the future.

At the end of July 2003, Colin Browne joined the ACLC as the new Advice lawyer. Colin comes from the private Criminal bar and brings with him extensive experience. Colin has continued to provide direct legal assistance in the form of summary legal advice, summary advocacy, information, and representation to members of the African Canadian community with legal problems within our mandated areas of practice.

To date, we have received intake calls on a wide range of issues such as education, immigration, discriminatory police practices, and human rights violations. Notably, we have received numerous Racial Profiling complaints from the African Canadian community involving police harassment on the street, in cars and in homes and stops and searches by Canada Customs at the airport and border. We have provided advice and advocacy on pursuing human rights complaints and police complaints.

As a result of the large number of inquiries from African Canadian parents whose children have been suspended or expelled under the Safe Schools provisions of the *Education Act*, the ACLC has faced high and increasing demands for legal representation. Under the "zero tolerance" Safe Schools regulations and policies, African Canadian students, including very young children, are being removed from the school often for minor infractions that pose no threat to safety. Such disciplinary action often results in school initiated police involvement and arrests. It has become obvious that "zero tolerance" has impacted disproportionately on African Canadian children. The ACLC in advocating on behalf of these families has represented parents and children at school board hearings, school and school board meetings, and liased with the criminal bar.

Many other inquiries to the ACLC relate to employment issues, in general, with concerns varying from workplace discrimination issues to the non-recognition of foreign credentials by licensing bodies of various trades and professions. Other services include advocating and advising in the areas of provincial offences, landlord and tenant, and criminal.

# ***COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & PUBLIC EDUCATION***

## ***Racial Profiling***

In 2002 the *Toronto Star* (*Star*) conducted an extensive review and analysis of the reports and statistics of the Toronto Police Services on police stops, charges, arrests and detention. The *Star* reported its findings in a series of articles commencing in October 2002. These reports served to validate the concerns expressed by the African Canadian community for decades that racial profiling is practised and African Canadians are targeted and disproportionately affected by this insidious practice. The *Star's* reports were met by denial and negative reaction by the Chief of Police and the Police Association.

The ACLC played a key leadership role in bringing together and co-ordinating the African Canadian Community Coalition (ACCC) in support of the *Star's* study and to respond to the denial by the police with respect to racial profiling and intense criticism of the *Star's* findings. This Coalition was comprised of over 35 of the main African Canadian organization's, agencies and leaders in the community. The membership of the ACCC now includes over 50 African Canadian organizations and leaders. The Coalition met on a regular basis to develop a strategic and collective response to the denial by provincial and municipal government officials, the Chief of Police, President of the Police Association and Chair of the Police Services Board that racial profiling exists and is practiced.

A press conference was organized and was well attended by all of the major mainstream and community based media organizations. Coalition members participated in numerous media events to discuss racial profiling. The ACCC was unified in its position that racial profiling is an everyday reality for African Canadians. The Coalition called for the following:

1. The establishment of an independent Police Complaints and Oversight Body to hold the police accountable for their actions and address community concerns regarding racism and racial profiling.
2. To work with the federal government to provide adequate resources to the Black community to develop and implement a community-based documentation project whereby African Canadians can gather stories and complaints from African Canadians who are victims of racial profiling.

3. The establishment of a process to implement the recommendations that have been made in existing reports on policing along with an independent audit mechanism to review the effectiveness of this implementation process every two years.

In the wake of the successful response from the African Canadian community, the Toronto Police Chief, Julian Fantino announced the appointment of Justice Charles Dubin to conduct a review of the policies and practices of the Toronto Police Services as they relate to race relations. The Coalition saw this as an attempt, on the part of the Toronto Police Services, to deny the existence of racial profiling, obfuscate their responsibility to address racial profiling and delay in the development of positive and effective measures and tools to end racial profiling. The Coalition was very vocal in its position to yet another study on policing and race relations, which will simply be archived. Justice Dubin subsequently stepped down from this review, calling it superfluous. In a press release prepared by the ACLC, the ACCC commended Justice Dubin for having the courage to listen to the Black community and step down. Justice Dubin's decision further acknowledged the appropriate process that is required, which is a sincere, action-oriented dialogue with Toronto's Black community leaders with respect to the issue of racial profiling and race relations with the Toronto Police Force.

The ACLC along with the majority of the ACCC members boycotted Chief Fantino's November 11<sup>th</sup> meeting with the Black community to discuss racial profiling and policing issues. Although the ACLC welcomes every and any opportunity to discuss the matters of extreme importance to the African Canadians, the decision of Chief Fantino to support the Toronto Police Association's multi-billion dollar lawsuit against the Toronto *Star* for defamation, was further denial that racial profiling is practised by members of his force. The ACLC took the position that Chief Fantino's support of the Association's lawsuit was an indication that he had no real intention of engaging in a serious and sincere dialogue with the African Canadian community or looking into whether or not systemic racism exists within the Toronto Police Service. In addition, the ACLC felt that Mr. Fantino's invitation to meet was not made in good faith, nor do we believe that he is committed to working in partnership towards solutions and specifically dealing with the issue of racial profiling.

The ACLC did, however, attend an African Canadian community meeting with the Police Services Board. This meeting was convened to discuss how the Toronto Police Services should address racial profiling among its members. In the face of continued resistance and denial by the Chair and some members of the Toronto Police Services Board a formal vote was taken and community members in attendance overwhelmingly voted that racial profiling exists.

The hard work and unified position of the Coalition was effective in keeping the discussion on racial profiling alive in the public domain. The effective strategies, public relations and advocacy campaign of the ACLC and the Coalition was successful in getting the federal Department of Multiculturalism to agree to hold a national conference on policing and encouraging the Ontario Human Rights Commission to conduct a provincial impact study on racial profiling on individuals and communities.

### ***Racial Profiling Best Practices Study***

The ACLC, on behalf of the ACCC, applied for and received funding from the Canadian Race Relations Foundation and the federal Department of Multiculturalism to conduct a study on racial profiling. The purpose of the study is to conduct research and compile documentation on best practices of police services and governments in Canada and other international jurisdiction to effectively address racial profiling. It was felt that this project is needed to ensure continued and meaningful African Canadian input and participation on an issue that has deeply affected and continues to affect our community.

A Best Practices Report will inform the community, identify action-oriented ways to address racial profiling and provide Toronto and other Canadian Police Services with concrete examples of strategies that have been employed successfully elsewhere.

A Community Advisory Committee was established to work with the ACLC and the project coordinator and researcher. Specific members of the community who have expertise and who have been involved in combating racism and racial profiling by the police will be consulted throughout the drafting of the report.

In February 2003, the project's research team was invited to present their preliminary findings at a national conference on Policing in a Multicultural Society hosted by Minister Jean Augustine.

The African Canadian and other racialized communities as well as government agencies and police forces will benefit from the constructive nature and impact of this project through the improvement of legislative and policy standards and community relations.

The Final Report from this project will be released in the Fall of 2003. Copies of the Report will be distributed widely to the ACLC membership and the wider African Canadian community.

***Ontario Human Rights Commission  
Inquiry on the Impact of Racial Profiling***

In November 2002, the ACLC organized a meeting with the Chief Commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission representatives of the ACLC, the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, the Congress of Black Women and the Urban Alliance on Race Relations. Commissioner Keith Norton and senior staff met to discuss the need for the Commission to respond to the *Toronto Star's* study on racial profiling. The ACLC and the other community representatives took the position that this issue was important to African Canadians as a racialized group and it was important for the Black community to see an institution dedicated to the protection of human rights of all Ontarians respond in support of the African Canadian community.

Although community representatives made it very clear that we were not interested in a study on

racial profiling to add to the countless reports and recommendations that have not been implemented, representatives were of the opinion that an impact study documenting the economic and emotional impact of racial profiling on individuals, families and communities was important. Representatives made it very clear that the Commission's study was not to determine the existence of, but the impact of, racial profiling. Another key component to the Inquiry was to address racial profiling not only with police but in other institutions such as in education, housing, employment, private security companies and businesses, just to name a few.

In February 2003, the Ontario Human Rights Commission announced the launch of its province-wide Inquiry of racial profiling under section 29 of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

The ACLC was asked to participate on the Commission's Advisory Committee to provide input to the Commission on the process to implement and achieve inclusion from a broad cross-section of communities in Ontario that are victims of racial profiling.

The ACLC with representatives from the ACCC met regularly to organize a public meeting with the African Canadian community and the Chief Commissioner. There were two components to the African Canadian public meeting. The first half of the meeting was dedicated to a Dialogue with the Chief Commissioner and Black youth. The Coalition members felt that African Canadian youth were particularly vulnerable to racial profiling and as such, should be provided with a safe space and be encouraged to speak out about this form of racist *targeting*. The second half of the meeting was open to all members of the community. Members of the community with very compelling stories of racial profiling gave deputations to the Chief Commissioner on their experiences. The African Canadian public meeting was very successful in demonstrating the extent and devastating impact of racial profiling on all sectors of the Black community.

The ACLC applauds the Commission for making the right decision to take the bold step to move forward with this timely, important and groundbreaking Inquiry. The Commission is expected to release its Report on its findings from the Inquiry sometime in the fall, 2003.

### ***Consultations with Deputy Attorney General***

In March 2003 members of the ACLC met with the Deputy Attorney General, Federal Department of Justice to discuss criminal justice initiatives for the African Canadian Community. The main focus of the consultation was a discussion on the social conditions of which have resulted in the high rate of poverty among African Canadians and the disproportionate numbers of Black Canadians that are incarcerated or in some way involved in the criminal justice system. ACLC representatives also discussed sentencing reform and youth justice initiatives

At the initial meeting the Deputy Attorney General expressed an interest in meeting with the members of the African Canadian community. A subsequent meeting was held with the

Department of Justice representatives of the Toronto regional office to plan a follow up meeting with the Deputy Minister.

In August of 2003 the ACLC co-ordinated a meeting between fifteen representatives of the African Canadian organizations and the Deputy Attorney General. Community representatives outlined the consensus and issues currently impacting on African Canadians. A clear set of initiatives was presented to the Deputy Attorney General. One of the suggestions that was made at the meeting was an annual consultation with the Department of Justice and the African Canadian community to discuss and address ongoing consensus. The ACLC will continue to be actively involved in this initiative.

### ***Post-WCAR Canadian Conference***

Since the Durban World Conference on Racism (WCAR) in 2001, the ACLC has been working at both the international and domestic levels to ensure the full implementation of the Durban Program of Action. The ACLC has been meeting with government ministers, particularly Jean Augustine, Minister of Multiculturalism (responsible for the implementation of WCAR) and Bill Graham, Minister of Foreign Affairs to advocate for a domestic process to discuss and develop an implementation plan.

As part of the Clinic's post-WCAR activities, the ACLC participated in the Canadian Race Relations Foundation's (CRRF) Advisory Committee to plan a national conference to develop a Post-WCAR Action Plan. The conference was held in October, 2003 in Edmonton and the ACLC chaired the Working Group on African Canadians. The Working Group developed several recommendations, which included a call for the Canadian government to acknowledge its role in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and the need to make reparations to African Canadians. These recommendations can be found in the Final Conference Report, which is posted on the CRRF website.

### ***Working Group of Experts on People of African Descendants***

The ACLC continues to be actively involved at the international level in post-WCAR discussions. The ACLC sent representatives to the meeting of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent (Working Group) to observe and participate in the discussions on an international action plan for Peoples of African Descent. The ACLC presented a brief and delivered an oral deputation on issues of concern to be addressed by the Working Group from an African Canadian perspective.

In addition to the meetings of the Working Group, the ACLC organized a meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and members of the African Canadian community that attended the WCAR. A key concern that was raised and discussed was the role Canada has played in trying

to block the creation of the Working Group. The members asked the Minister to demonstrate leadership in the Western European and Others Group (WEOG), of which Canada belongs, to support the continued work of the Working Group and to encourage the WEOG to appoint a representative to the Working Group. At the 2003 meetings of the UN Commission on Human Rights, Canada abstained from the vote in support of the continuation of the Working Group. Officials of the Department of Foreign Affairs are of the opinion that an abstention rather than voting 'no' is a progressive move on the part of Canada. However, Canada was instrumental in getting the WEOG to appoint a member. The representative of the WEOG on the Working Group is Joe Frans (Sweden).

The ACLC will continue to support and participate in the meetings and discussions of the Working Group. The ACLC believes that the recommendations of this UN Committee will go a long way in helping African Canadians and all African-descendant Peoples in our struggle for equality.

### ***Distinguished Lecture Series - Derrick Bell***

The ACLC was privileged to have renowned professor, author and critical race theorist Derrick Bell give the ACLC's Distinguished Lecture in December 2002. The lecture was co-organized by Osgoode Hall Law School and was well attended by members of the legal profession and the community. Professor Bell provided an engaging, humorous and thought provoking lecture related to his new book "Ethical Ambitions: Living a Life of Meaning and Worth". He reflected on his own experiences and spoke about how lawyers and legal academics can pursue their professions in an ethical and meaningful way.

### ***Human Rights Training***

The ACLC provided human rights anti-racial discrimination training to Legal Aid Ontario Clinic staff in two major Legal Aid Ontario conferences held in April and June 2003. This training was to assist Clinic staff to recognize and deal with issues of racial discrimination, to understand issues of equity in their clinics, and to fully represent African Canadians in human rights complaints.

### ***Zero Tolerance in Schools***

In April 2003, the ACLC participated in the R.I.S.E. Equity Conference "Making the Links: Equity and Literacy", organized by the York Region District School Board. In its presentation, the ACLC raised the equity considerations related to the "Safe Schools" provisions of the

*Education Act* and discussed the experiences of the ACLC with the *Act* and the disparate harmful impact of the zero tolerance provisions and regulations on African Canadian students, parents and families.

***Panel Presentations on Racial Profiling  
BLSAC Conference***

The ACLC presented on the issue of racial profiling and the criminalization of the community at the annual Black Law Students' Association of Canada in February 2003. Issues discussed included the practice of racial profiling, systemic racism in the criminal justice system and the impact of racial profiling on the African Canadian community.

***University of Toronto BLSA Discussion Panel***

In October 2002, the ACLC participated in a discussion panel "Toronto *Star* Report on Policing, Race and Crime", organized by the Black Law Students Association of the Faculty of Law, University of Toronto, presenting on how to raise race issues in court and litigate racial profiling.

***AWARDS***

***Coalition of Black Trade Unionist Award - CBTU***

The Coalition of Black Trade Unionist (CBTU) honoured the ACLC with an award "in recognition of the Clinic's invaluable contribution to the community". This award recognised the ACLC's test case litigation and community development work and its national leadership in preparation for the WCAR. The award was accepted on behalf of the ACLC by the Executive Director, Margaret Parsons. The ACLC is grateful to the CBTU for this recognition. This award is a demonstration of the enormous support that exists within the African Canadian community for the ACLC.

***Association of Black Law Enforcement - ABLE***

The ACLC also received an award from the Association of Black Law Enforcers (ABLE). The award was presented to the ACLC "in recognition of our fight against racism and commitment to ensuring justice for our community". In presenting this award to the ACLC, ABLE highlighted the precedent setting cases of the ACLC and the role of the Clinic in organizing the community around the issue of racial profiling. This award was accepted on behalf of the ACLC by Donald McLeod a member of the ACLC's Board of Directors. The ACLC thanks ABLE for their recognition of the Clinic's work on behalf of the Black community in Ontario.

The ACLC is humbled by these two Awards and the extent of support among African Canadian

organizations for the ACLC. These awards from ABLE and CBTU will serve as encouragement and will bolster the commitment of the Board and Staff to continue to serve our community in the face of what seems at times insurmountable adversity.

# ***LAW REFORM AND ADVOCACY***

## ***Racial Profiling and the Toronto Police Services Board***

In the aftermath of the *Toronto Star* series on "Race and Crime" in October 2002 which concluded that African Canadians were treated more harshly than whites, the ACLC participated in meetings of the Toronto Police Services Board (PSB), raising the issue of racial profiling of African Canadians by the police.

In February 2003, the ACLC responded to the review and critique of the *Star's* analysis conducted by a University of Toronto sociologist and a lawyer, hired by Police Chief Fantino. The review took place unannounced during a meeting of the PSB and came as a surprise to the community organizations attending that were under the impression that the PSB was prepared to hear their perspective. In its presentation, the ACLC took the position that the community had been broadsided, that racial profiling of African Canadians is a reality which the PSB needed to address and take concrete action on and not continue to deny its existence.

As a result of these developments and the disregard by the PSB of African Canadian community concerns, in April 2003 the African Canadian Legal Clinic (as part of the African Canadian Community Coalition) decided that it would no longer appear before the PSB on the issue of racial profiling and took the issue to its governing body, the Ontario Civilian Commission on Police Services. In June 2003, the Coalition appeared before OCCPS with their experts who refuted the police commissioned report.

## ***Police Accountability and the Toronto Police Services Board***

In July 2003, the ACLC provided written and oral depositions to the Toronto Police Services Board (PSB) with respect to the Police Chief's response to the City Auditor's Report on the Toronto Police Service's Public Complaints Process. The ACLC spoke to the need for a truly impartial and accountable independent civilian oversight body, one that is responsive to the needs of the community. The ACLC pointed out the problem of the "chilling effect" of a police administered public complaints process, and the failure of the Chief to implement key recommendations made by the City Auditor that related to fundamental problems with the current complaints system.

## ***Adams Review of the Special Investigations Unit Reforms***

In February 2003, the *Review Report on the Special Investigations Unit Reforms prepared for the Attorney General of Ontario by The Honourable George W. Adams, Q.C.* was released. The report reviewed the twenty-five recommendations made previously in 1998 by Mr. Adams concerning police co-operation with the SIU. The ACLC participated in the consultative process,

meeting on two occasions with Mr. Adams. The ACLC brought Mr. Adams attention to the disparate impact of police shootings on African Canadians, that race is brought to play in these shootings, and that high standards of accountability applied to the police because of their extraordinary powers to carry and use firearms. The ACLC urged Mr. Adams to recommend that the "serious injury" mandate of the SIU be applied broadly to acknowledge that police violence is to be taken seriously and to recommend that non-co-operation with the SIU be made a statutory offence under the *Police Services Act*.

### ***Implementation of Canada Customs Racial Profiling Settlement***

The ACLC has an active and consultative role in the implementation of this groundbreaking settlement, which resulted from a human rights complaint by an African Canadian man of racial profiling by Canada Customs. The settlement includes systemic remedies such as a pilot project to collect data on secondary referrals by Canada Customs on the basis of race, colour, national or ethnic origin and gender, to consider the permanent collection of such statistics, and to study the impact of port of entry criteria applied by Canada Customs on African Canadians. The project is at the first stage, that is, the designing of the pilot project. The ACLC has met with CCRA staff and with the consulting team to ensure that the issue of racial profiling of African Canadians is taken into account.

As part of the settlement, the ACLC participated in a meeting with the Assistant Commissioner for Southern Ontario Region and other senior officials in March 2003. The ACLC brought representatives from a wide spectrum of community organizations who provided candid perspectives on the impact of Canada Customs practices on their respective communities.

### ***DFAIT Human Rights Consultations***

In February 2003, the ACLC participated in the NGO Human Rights Consultations with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade in Ottawa. The ACLC brought forward the concerns with the Federal government's failure to support the initiatives for African descendant peoples from the Durban World Conference Against Racism, both on a domestic and international level. The Canadian government since WCAR had failed to support important UN Resolutions related to racism and racial discrimination, in particular those dealing with the Working Group of Independent Experts on People of African Descent. The ACLC expressed disappointment at the government's lack of commitment to anti-racist issues, requested explanations for the government's position and urged that Canada support future UN Resolutions with respect to the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, particularly for African descendants.

### ***Citizenship Act, Bill C-18***

Bill C-18 was introduced in October 2002 by the Federal government to amend the *Citizenship Act*. The ACLC provided a written brief and made an oral deputation to the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration in February 2003. Concerns of the African Canadian community to the proposed amendments were raised by the ACLC, such as the apparent ease in which citizenship could be revoked, the lack of protection of the rights of the child, the lack of due process with respect to loss or revocation of citizenship, the provision for a referral certificate, and the arbitrariness of the grounds for a refusal of citizenship.