

Canadian Interfaith Conversation Executive Committee – Feb. 2022



Pastor Peter Noteboom
General Secretary
The Canadian Council of
Churches

Peter was appointed to a five-year term as General Secretary in May 2018. The responsibilities of General Secretary are to lift up the call for gospel unity, to provide direction and leadership through the development of vision and priorities, to implement the strategic and program plans of the Council, to facilitate Canadian and global ecumenical relationships, and to participate and lead in Canadian Interfaith initiatives. Peter serves as Co-Chair of the Canadian Interfaith Conversation, advocating for religion in a pluralistic society and in Canadian public life. He is also a member of the Interfaith Committee for the Canadian Military Chaplaincy and the Interfaith Committee on the Chaplaincy in the Correctional Service of Canada. Peter lives in Toronto with his wife Jeanette. They have two children.



Zul Kassamali
President, 1 Naas

Zul is an individual who has worked tirelessly to overcome prejudices and to right social injustices, not through angry words or retribution, but through positive action. He has over 50 years of experience in establishing, managing and working with not-for-profit, interfaith and other community organizations, sitting on many boards, commissions and councils. Zul has served as President of the Toronto Area Interfaith Council since 2010 and Co-Chair of the Canadian Interfaith Conversation since April 2016. He and his wife Gulshan ran a family florist business together until 2012 when Gulshan passed away. Since then, Zul has increased his community service efforts. He is motivated by the question, “What legacy am I leaving behind?” Zul is Ismaili and loves all things spiritual. He lives in Toronto with his daughter.



Bruce J. Clemenger
President
The Evangelical
Fellowship of Canada

Bruce became president of The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada on June 1, 2003. He had served with EFC since 1992. In 1996 he established the EFC's Ottawa office and became the founding director of the EFC's Centre for Faith and Public Life. He holds a B.A. (honours) in economics and history, and a Master of Philosophical Foundations in political theory. He is currently working on a PhD in political theory which examines the accommodation of religious, cultural and institutional pluralism within the context of political liberalism. Prior to his work at the EFC, he served with Samaritan's Purse Canada, a relief and development organization. He and his wife, Tracy, and their two daughters live in the Ottawa Valley.



Dr. Geoffrey Cameron
 Director of Public Affairs
 Baha'i Community of Canada

Geoff is the Director of the Office of Public Affairs. He has previously worked as a senior policy advisor at Global Affairs Canada, and as a researcher with the Oxford Martin School, University of Oxford. In addition to his work with the Baha'i community, Geoff teaches courses on Canadian public policy in the Department of Political Science at McMaster University and is Research Associate with the Global Migration Lab at the University of Toronto. His education includes a PhD from the University of Toronto, an M.Phil. from the University of Oxford, and a B.A. from Trent University. He has served on the CIC Executive since 2016 and has chaired the last two OWS conferences in Toronto (2019) and online (2021). Geoff lives in Hamilton with his wife Lita, a family physician, and two children ages 6 and 10. They enjoy spending time outdoors hiking on the Bruce Trail with their two dogs, running, cycling and birdwatching.



Sandra G. Pallin, National
 Communication Director
 The Church of Jesus Christ
 of Latter-day Saints

Sandra has been National Communication Director since 2012. Prior to that she served one year as Director of Public Affairs for Canada East. She has served on the CIC executive since April 2015. Sandra was born and raised in Toronto and is fifth of nine siblings. She graduated from Brigham Young University – Idaho campus then served an 18-month mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Tokyo, Japan. She graduated from Osgoode Hall Law School and is licensed with the Law Society of Ontario. Her legal practise is in the economic categories of immigration. This has afforded her learning, insight and appreciation for the global family. Sandra's work for the Church is in a volunteer capacity, as requested by Church HQ in Utah. Her favourite place to be is with family at the cottage in the Kawarthas.



Khushwant Kaur
 Board of Directors - ON
 World Sikh Organization
 of Canada

My name is Khushwant and I am a proud mother of two amazing kids. My partner is someone who encourages and challenges me and for that I am grateful. I have been on the Board with the WSO for two years, however, I have been volunteering with this organization since was a little girl. My academic career in Legal Studies, work in the Government of Canada and being a Marketing Coordinator has allowed me to question, initiate and encourage difficult conversations – political and social. I strongly believe in equality for all and helping those in need. Personally, I love everything to do with fitness and nutrition. I am a certified Yoga instructor and a Personal Trainer. Spending time with my family is my top priority and I value this immensely.



Sheba Birhanu Associate
Director, Partnerships
Centre for Israel and
Jewish Affairs

Sheba is a Canadian-Ethiopian Jewish activist. She is currently Associate Director, Partnerships at CIJA where she works on issues of online hate and facilitates cultural, religious and political collaboration on issues of shared concern. Her current work focuses on issues of human rights, safety, and equity in software development and technology. Sheba began her career in media publishing and production, serving as program director of Honey Jam, a non-profit women's music program dedicated to providing educational and economic resources and opportunities. She later served as coordinator at Ontario Creates, an agency of the provincial government. She was born and raised in Toronto and holds a B.A. (Hons.) in Communication Studies from York University and is currently pursuing an Advanced Diploma in Computer Programming and Analytics at Seneca College's School of Software Design & Data Science.



Belle Jarniewski
Executive Director
Jewish Heritage Centre of
Western Canada

Belle is the Executive Director of the Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada and since 2013, she has served on the federally appointed delegation to IHRA- the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. Belle's 2010 book, *Voices of Winnipeg Holocaust Survivors*, serves as an important document in the history of 73 local survivors before, during and after the Shoah. Through her work at the Jewish Heritage Centre, she brings education on the Holocaust and antisemitism to thousands of students each year. She is also the past president of the Manitoba Multifaith Council and has co-founded both a Catholic-Jewish and a Muslim-Jewish dialogue group."



Akaash Maharaj
Ambassador-at-Large
Global Organization of
Parliamentarians Against
Corruption

Akaash Maharaj is Ambassador-at-Large for the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC). He represents the international alliance of democratically-elected legislators in its work combatting corruption, strengthening good government, and upholding the rule of law. He also leads GOPAC's project on international prosecution of Crimes Against Humanity and its work on reconciliation in post-conflict states. The United Nations selected him to speak for the world's legislators in the General Assembly Chamber, on bringing kleptocrats to justice. Earlier in his life, he was an international athlete for Canada, and was a triple gold medallist at the International Championships of Equestrian Skill-at-Arms. He earned his Master of Arts from Oxford University, and was the first overseas student elected President of the student government in the history of the 900 year-old University. He completed further studies at the Sorbonne Université and the United Nations University.



Haseen Khan
*Muslim Association of
 Newfoundland and
 Labrador*

Haseen has been a member of the Muslim community of St. John's since 1990 when his family immigrated to NL from Saudi Arabia. He is employed by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador as Director of Water Resources Management Division, Dept. of Environment and Climate Change. He is recipient of the first Public Service Award of Excellence from the provincial government. Haseen is an executive member of the Muslim Association of Newfoundland and Labrador (MANAL), and currently serves as Treasurer. He served as VP from 1998 – 2000 and Interim President in 2000. Haseen represents MANAL on the interfaith in St. John's and NL Religious Social Action Coalition for poverty reduction. He delivers Friday sermon at the Mosque and is MANAL's Marriage Officer and Pastoral Care contact. He has helped establish the Newfoundland and Labrador Food Umbrella Inc. (NLFUI) and is on the Board of Directors. Haseen is a recipient of the Senate of Canada 150 Anniversary medal for his volunteer services to the Muslim Association of Newfoundland and Labrador.



Arun Chatterjee
*Chair, Multifaith Summit
 Council of British
 Columbia*

Arun Chatterjee has lived in Canada for last 25 years. He grew up in India in a Hindu household with interfaith orientation. Originally an engineer, an awakening experience brought him to the work of Interfaith Spiritual care. Currently Arun works in a hospital in Vancouver as a Spiritual Care Practitioner. He lives in Surrey, BC with his family. Arun led interfaith homeless ministry in the past for many years. He is the current Chair of Multifaith Summit Council of BC. Social justice, environmental stewardship and TRC are some of the areas of his deep interest. For Arun it is a privilege to serve as a part of CIC executive.



Shaila Kibria Carter
*Interfaith Specialist
 Islamic Relief Canada*

Shaila is a wife, mother, and daughter to one of the first Bangladeshi Immigrants to Canada. A community activist at heart, Shaila started as VP Equity at University of Toronto Student Union fighting for social justice issues and is now Interfaith Advisor of the largest Muslim relief organization in the country, Islamic Relief Canada. Shaila has raised money for Syrian refugees, fundraised for marginalized Black youth, been one of the voices for women, and helped facilitate Muslim-Indigenous partnerships. She is author of the book "Maariyah's Day", about a girl's experience being a Canadian Muslim. Shaila loves working with people of different cultures and religions and strives to build bridges. This has led her to pursue her masters in theology at U of T. Shaila is proud of her interfaith work and CBC Radio 1 freelancing stories about the multicultural tapestry in Canada.



Richard Chambers
Program Coordinator
Canadian Interfaith
Conversation

Richard Chambers previously served as the director of the University of Toronto Multi-Faith Centre for Spiritual Study and Practice. The Centre engages students in questions of religious pluralism. Prior to this Richard served in the national offices of the United Church of Canada. He has graduate degrees in applied ethics and education from Harvard University and theology from University of Toronto. Research interests include moral development with young adults and the role of religion in civil society.

First meeting of the new CIC executive committee – Feb. 1, 2022

