Press Release

Threats to Academic Freedom
Scholars at Risk Network
December 8th, 2016

Ottawa, ON: The Steering Committee of the Canadian Section of the Scholars at Risk Network (SAR) along with Gary Anandasangaree (MP, Scarborough Rouge Park), Peter Kent (MP, Thornhill), and Murray Rankin (MP, Victoria) will host a series of panel discussion on academic freedom at the Canadian Parliament and the University of Ottawa on December 8th, 2016. Media are invited to attend.

The session will begin with a dynamic panel conversation in the Canadian Parliament that will bring attention to the SAR Network and the struggle for academic freedom. The morning session in Parliament will be followed by attendance at Question Period in the House, and a public lecture at the University of Ottawa on the importance of academic freedom. In addition to the scholars currently being hosted by Canadian institutions, Dr. Homa Hoodfar and the Hon. Irwin Cotler will be joining as discussants and contributors on this day. In addition, Dr. Irv Epstein from the SAR Board of Directors will be in attendance.

Media are invited to attend the following sessions:
10:30am – 12:00pm Panel in the Canadian Parliament (RCR Building – 1 Wellington Street, Room C-180)
4:00pm – 5:30pm Public Panel Discussion at the University of Ottawa “Academic Freedom in a Volatile World” (57 Louis-Pasteur, Fauteux Hall Room 147, 1st Floor)

Contact: scholarsatriskcanada@gmail.com

Background:

Around the world today, scholars are attacked because of their words, their ideas and their place in society. Those seeking power and control work to limit access to information and new ideas by targeting scholars, restricting academic freedom, and repressing research, publication, teaching and learning. The SAR Network responds to these threats through awareness-raising, advocacy and the provision of university placements for scholars who are at risk in their home countries.

SAR is an international network of higher education institutions, associations and individuals acting together to protect threatened scholars, promote academic freedom, and defend everyone’s
right to think, question and share ideas freely and safely. SAR Canada, launched in 2012, engages Canadian institutions with the global SAR effort and enhances national coordination of activities in support of academic freedom, university autonomy, and related values. In joining SAR Canada and hosting scholars, Canadian universities, academic leaders, and staff send a strong message of solidarity with scholars and institutions in situations where academic freedom is restricted and research, publication, teaching and learning are repressed.

The SAR Canada Steering Committee,

Viviana Fernandez
Directrice adjointe | Assistant Director
Centre de recherche et d’enseignement sur les droits de la personne |
Human Rights Research and Education Centre
Université d’Ottawa |
University of Ottawa
Viviana.Fernandez@uottawa.ca

Dr. Melanie Adrian
Associate Professor
Department of Law and Legal Studies
Carleton University
melanie.adrian@carleton.ca

Nandini Ramanujam
Associate Professor (Professional)
Executive Director and Director of Programs
Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism
Faculty of Law, McGill University
nandini.ramanujam@mcgill.ca

Anneke Smit
Associate Professor
Faculty of Law
University of Windsor
asmit@uwindsor.ca