

## West Coast LEAF News Alert September 21, 2009



### Practicing social justice law? Do you want to be? Join us at the Social Justice Law Conference 2009!

The [2009 Social Justice Law Conference](#) is a chance for lawyers who practice law in social justice fields, or law students or lawyers who wish to practice law in social justice fields, to discuss issues related to this unique practice area.

The conference is aimed at building a community of lawyers committed to social justice principles for ongoing networking, professional development and advocacy opportunities. Supporting organizations are the [B.C. Civil Liberties Association](#) and [West Coast LEAF](#), with the support of many alumni of the former Law Union of B.C.

Guest speakers will present on personal routes to social justice practice, social justice practice models, the ways progressive lawyers organize themselves in Canada and the U.S., and how progressive lawyers have organized themselves historically in British Columbia.

**WHAT:** Social Justice Law Conference 2009

**WHEN:** October 31, 2009

**WHERE:** Simon Fraser University Harbour Centre

**WHO:** Leading aboriginal law specialists, grassroots lawyer activists and lawyers who lead some of the most innovative social justice practice models in Canada, including: Louise Mandell, Q.C., Mandell Pinder; Frances Kelly, Community Legal Assistance Society; Dyanooosh Youssefi, Law Union of Ontario

The registration fee is a sliding scale of \$25 - \$75, pay what you can. Pre-registrations are now being accepted. To pre-register today, [follow the directions here](#).

Join the [facebook group](#).

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## Housing and human rights

West Coast LEAF has signed on to a **petition supporting the ratification of the Optional Protocol for the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)**.

The [CESCR](#) protects economic and social rights such as rights to food, water, shelter and health care. Because of the global feminization of poverty, we know that these are the most significant rights to most women worldwide.

The Optional Protocol is a new instrument that will create a complaint mechanism for the CESCR - meaning that when individuals feel that their rights under the CESCR have been violated, they can seek a remedy through the means of the Optional Protocol. This is significant, not only because it will provide women with a remedy on these important human rights, but because these types of rights are traditionally seen as unenforceable, especially in Canada.

The [OP-CESCR](#) opens for signature on September 24, and West Coast LEAF urges Canada to ratify this important human rights document.

West Coast LEAF also signed on the **2009 Homelessness Action Week's "Speak Up for Affordable Housing"** campaign, recognizing the importance of safe and affordable housing for women.

We hope that you and/or your organization will join us in endorsing this campaign and supporting the goal of establishing a national housing strategy.

[Homelessness Action Week](#) is October 11 - 17.

#### About [West Coast LEAF](#)

West Coast LEAF's mission is to achieve equality by changing historic patterns of discrimination against women through BC based equality rights litigation, law reform and public legal education.

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