THE MANITOBA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

LA COMMISSION DES DROITS DE LA PERSONNE DU MANITOBA

Manitoba Human Rights Commission
For Immediate Release July 27, 2005

Human rights commissions to champion a Canadian coalition of municipalities against racism

Human rights commissions attending a recent meeting of the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies (CASHRA) in Saskatoon have agreed to provide support in principle for the work of the **Canadian Commission for UNESCO** (CCU) calling for the establishment of a *Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism*. The Manitoba Human Rights Commission is among the ten commissions supporting the initiative. All agreed to promote the initiative within their own jurisdictions in keeping with their own priorities and resources.

The proposal to establish a *Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism* is based on the UNESCO (United Nations Economic, Social and Cultural Organization) plan for an International Coalition of Cities Against Racism. Launched in 2004, its goal is to establish a network of regional coalitions around the world committed to fighting racism.

The Preliminary Proposal for the Canadian Coalition calls on municipalities to adopt 10 common commitments for combating racism in their communities in the areas of community development, employment, policing, housing, culture, and education, among others. In the next year, the CCU, and partner organizations will consult with municipalities, asking for their feedback and to consider joining the Canadian Coalition. Once a final proposal has been reached, municipalities will be asked to sign a declaration adopting the common commitments, and would then develop their own local plans to fight racism.

Commenting on the initiative, Donna Scott, President of CASHRA and Chief Commissioner of the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission stated that, "Statutory human rights agencies in Canada have a mandated role to prevent and combat racism and discrimination. This coalition provides the opportunity to strengthen the work that is already occurring in our own jurisdictions with the work of others across the country."

The Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies (CASHRA) is a forum for federal, provincial and territorial human rights agencies which have as some of their functions the administration and enforcement of anti-discrimination laws.

- 30 -

For more information please contact,
Patricia Knipe
Communications Director
945-5112