



**Mennonite New Life Centre of Toronto**  
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*December 18, 2006*

The Honourable Monte Solberg, P.C., M.P.  
Citizenship and Immigration Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 1L1

Dear Mr. Solberg

December 18 has been recognized by the United Nations as International Migrants Day, a day for dissemination of information on the human rights and fundamental freedoms of migrants - be they regular or irregular, documented or undocumented. In honour of this day, I take the opportunity to express my concern for non-status immigrants in Canada.

An estimated 200 000 non-status immigrants live and work in this country, filling labour shortages in key areas of the Canadian economy. Of all newcomers to Canada, non-status immigrants are the most vulnerable to social exclusion and poverty. Non-status immigrants face a high risk of labour exploitation, as well as formidable barriers to accessing basic services. In addition, they live with severe emotional stress, in constant fear of being detained and deported.

I believe that non-status immigrants and their families must be offered a path out of this life of insecurity and chronic poverty. I urge you to help non-status immigrants secure fair treatment in Canada by:

- **Signing the International Convention** on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.
- **Revising the immigration points system** to reflect the wide range of labour needs in Canada, including needs for manual labourers.
- **Implementing the Refugee Appeal Division** as provided for in the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA).
- **Implementing a Regularization Program.** Introduce a moratorium on the deportation of non-status persons who come forward to have their status regularized, at least until their case has been reviewed.

I strongly urge you to heed these and other important policy recommendations outlined in a December 2006 brief by the Mennonite New Life Centre of Toronto to the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration. The Centre's recommendations are informed by twenty three years of front line settlement work with migrants from all over the world. They are also informed by Mennonite values of compassion, peace and non-violence.

As a friend of the Mennonite New Life Centre, I wish to add my voice and express my desire that Canadian immigration law reflect values of compassion and non-violence, asserting and protecting the human rights of all newcomers. On this International Migrants Day, I urge the Minister to resolve to grant non-status immigrants in Canada the right to have rights. Let Canada bring in the new year by signing the Migrant Workers Convention and implementing the policy changes recommended above.

Sincerely,

Tanya Chute Molina  
Executive Director