



*The Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties supports the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as it secures the nation while preserving individual liberty, fairness, and equality under the law.*

### **DHS Presents Before the UN Committee to Eliminate Racial Discrimination**

CRCL and other DHS officials were part of the U.S. delegation that appeared in Geneva before the UN Committee to Eliminate Racial Discrimination. The delegation presented its 2013 periodic report on the implementation of U.S. obligations under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD).

CRCL Deputy Officer Veronica Venture and fellow DHS officials responded to questions on DHS-related issues, including the recent influx of unaccompanied children and families with children, use of force at the border, and immigration detention. They highlighted the many efforts and resources DHS has implemented to address and resolve these issues.

The full U.S. delegation included officials from the U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Justice, Labor, State, and the Environmental Protection Agency. Rounding out the delegation were state and local representatives, the attorney general for Arkansas and the mayor of Birmingham, Alabama.



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*CRCL Deputy Officer Veronica Venture presents before the UN Committee to Eliminate Racial Discrimination.*

### **CRCL Officer Speaks at Naturalization Ceremony**

CRCL Officer Megan Mack gave keynote remarks at a naturalization ceremony held in the metropolitan Washington area, hosted by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Nearly 500 new citizens from 75 countries received the [Oath of Allegiance](#) at this ceremony. Each year USCIS welcomes approximately 680,000 citizens, including members of the military and their spouses, during naturalization ceremonies across the United States and around the world.

## **White House Initiative to Provide Legal Representation for Unaccompanied Children**

CRCL Officer Megan Mack participated in a meeting convened by the White House concerning legal services for unaccompanied minors. Vice President Joe Biden appealed to about 60 lawyers and legal groups to donate pro bono legal representation and services to assist the tens of thousands of children who have crossed the Southwest border—primarily from Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala.

Biden noted there aren't enough attorneys to represent those children who have been detained. He stressed the need for trained lawyers to address the backlog of cases and determine whether or not the children meet the criteria for refugee status or deportation to their home countries. Officer Mack provided an assessment on civil rights and civil liberties implications regarding the current situation at the border. Mack encouraged attorneys to get involved across the country especially in the major metropolitan areas where unaccompanied children have been released to families or legal guardians.

## **CRCL Observes Two-Year Anniversary of Sikh Temple Shooting**

CRCL observed the two-year anniversary of the Sikh Gurdwara shooting in Oak Creek, Wisconsin at its recent quarterly roundtable, which was hosted by Singh Sabha Gurdwara of Seattle. The roundtable opened with a moment of silence in memory of those who lost their lives during the August 2012 terrorist attack. Afterward, CRCL delivered a presentation discussing the attack and the violent extremist motivations of the attacker, and featured a video clip of the police car camera narrated by the Oak Creek Police Chief.



The USCIS District Director for Seattle presented on DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) and addressed several questions on the renewal process, much of them focused on the uncertainty of the program's future and potential ICE enforcement action if the program is not renewed. An official from the DHS National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD) also presented on various areas, including cyber and infrastructure protection, and NPPD's role in countering violent extremism.

There were approximately 70 attendees, including 20 college-aged men and women from the Sikh and Muslim communities who expressed concerns about whether or not other non-immigration benefits were extended under DACA. Seattle and Washington state partners responded with information on the state-level "DREAM Act" and how its benefits (including health and education) are extended regardless of immigration status.

Additional federal agencies that were represented included U.S. Customs and Border Protection, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Federal Air Marshal Service, U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service, Federal Bureau of Investigation, U.S. Health and Human Services, the local U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Washington, the state of Washington, the Seattle Commission on Human Rights, and the Seattle Police Department. Staff were present from four local Congressional offices, and several interfaith communities and immigrant advocacy groups were represented, including the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project and One America.

## **CRCL Participates in CVE Summit at Federal Law Enforcement Training Center**

CRCL participated in the 2014 National Summit on Empowering Communities to Prevent Violent Extremism in the U.S., held at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Georgia. The two-day summit brought together community members and law enforcement officials from across the U.S., including Boston, Los Angeles, Minneapolis/St. Paul, and Dearborn, Michigan. The summit allowed federal, state, and local partners to share best practices on community engagement and community policing models in an effort to counter violent extremism.

## **FEMA Launches Spanish-Language App**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recently launched a free Spanish-language app with information on what individuals can do before, during and after a disaster to keep their families and communities safe.

FEMA's Spanish-language app offers a wide array of information for the public and disaster survivors, including preparedness tips, locations of nearby shelters, what to include in an emergency supply kit and a user friendly interface for survivors who may need assistance from FEMA after a disaster.

“You can take the first step to disaster preparedness with just the swipe of your finger,” said FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate. “Smartphones, tablets, and other mobile devices have made our lives more convenient – this app empowers us to be prepared. The FEMA app is now available in Spanish. I encourage everyone to download it today to have access to the latest information on steps to take before, during, and after a disaster.”



Some key features of the app include:

- **Safety Tips:** This feature helps users prepare for flooding, hurricanes, tornadoes and other disasters by providing tips on how to be informed about potential hazards and what steps to take before, during, and after an emergency.
- **Emergency Meeting Locations:** This tool offers the capability to set an emergency meeting place for you and your family with the option of having a primary, secondary and out of state location.
- **Apply for Assistance:** The FEMA Spanish-language App will help users locate a disaster recovery center after a Major Disaster Declaration with [Individual Assistance](#) has been issued. This feature also provides information about how to offer volunteer services and donations.

The app offers pre-loaded content ensuring that FEMA guidance is available anytime and anywhere – even if no Internet connection is available. The app is free and available for iPhones and Android devices in the iTunes and the Google Play Stores.

### **Other Content (in Spanish):**

- [Video Introduction of FEMA Spanish-Language App](#)
- [FEMA blog post on the Spanish-Language App](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Additional information about preparedness is also available at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) and [www.listo.gov](http://www.listo.gov).

## **CRCL on the Road, August**

### ***August 14 – Seattle, Washington***

CRCL convened its quarterly community engagement roundtable with diverse ethnic and community-based organizations.

### ***August 22 – Orlando, Florida***

CRCL convened its quarterly community engagement roundtable with diverse ethnic and community-based organizations.

### ***August 21 – Minneapolis, Minnesota***

CRCL convened its quarterly community engagement roundtable with diverse ethnic and community-based organizations.

### ***August 27 – Los Angeles, California***

CRCL will convene its quarterly community engagement roundtable with diverse ethnic and community-based organizations.

### ***August 28 – New York, New York***

CRCL will convene its quarterly community engagement roundtable with diverse ethnic and community-based organizations.

### **Additional information, and contacting us**

The goal of this periodic newsletter is to inform members of the public about the activities of the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, including: how to file complaints; ongoing and upcoming projects; opportunities to offer comments and feedback; etc. We distribute our newsletters via an email list and make them available to community groups for redistribution. We also post information pulled from the newsletter on a webpage, [CRCL at Work](#). If you would like to receive this newsletter via email, want to request back issues, or have other comments or questions, please let us know by emailing [crcloutreach@dhs.gov](mailto:crcloutreach@dhs.gov).

If you are on this list, but no longer wish to receive the newsletter, please send an email to the same address asking us to unsubscribe you. For more information, including on how to make a civil rights or civil liberties complaint about DHS activities, see [www.dhs.gov/crcl](http://www.dhs.gov/crcl).

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