



**THE  
MOSAIC  
INSTITUTE**

www.mosaicinstitute.ca

Issue No. 12:  
Spring/Summer 2012

# THE MOSAIC DISPATCH

HARNESSING CANADA'S DIVERSITY FOR  
PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT ABROAD

## Mosaic Institute Receives Funding for Landmark Study of Imported Conflicts



Dr. Rima Berns-McGown,  
Senior Project Advisor &  
Research Director for the  
Mosaic Institute's Project  
on Imported Conflicts,  
funded by Public Safety  
Canada.

On May 30, 2012, the Government of Canada announced the first round of funding under its **Kanishka Project**, a \$10 million, multi-year commitment to study the prevention of and response to acts of violent extremism and terrorism in Canada. The Mosaic Institute was one of the first organizations to receive funding under the project.

Mosaic will spend two years studying the difference between the perception of "imported conflict" in Canada on the one hand, and the reality of its prevalence and persistence on the other. Of particular interest will be exploring how living in pluralistic Canada changes the way people see conflicts that originate overseas; how conflict expresses itself in Canada; and how diasporic Canadians manage conflict if and when it does manifest itself in their chosen homeland. Mosaic will be hearing from thousands of Canadians with connections to a wide variety of civil or regional conflicts around the world.

Serving as Senior Project Advisor and Research Director for the project will be **Dr. Rima Berns-McGown (pictured above)**. Dr. Berns-McGown is a nationally-recognized scholar, writer and editor who teaches diaspora studies with the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies and the Department of Historical Studies at the University of Toronto. Rima starts this project with the Mosaic Institute fresh from her tenure as Managing Editor of **International Journal**, the Canadian academic quarterly of international politics.

### Mosaic Institute: What We Do

The Mosaic Institute is an action-oriented think tank that harnesses the connections, knowledge and resources of Canada's ethnocultural communities to advance Canadian solutions and promote peace and development in conflict-ridden or under-developed parts of the world.

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## OMNI Mandarin News features Mosaic's Work on China-Tibet



One of the Mosaic Institute's newest initiatives – ***“New Beginnings: Young Canadians’ Peace Dialogue on China and Tibet”*** – was profiled on OMNI Television’s Mandarin News program on May 11<sup>th</sup>.

Here is a rough English translation of the coverage:

*“The Mosaic Institute hopes to draw 200 youth from Chinese and Tibetan communities in Toronto and Calgary together to engage in frank dialogue about issues of mutual concern. The two-year program will run simultaneously in Toronto and Calgary. The Mosaic Institute is bringing together interested youth between 18 and 30 years of age. At this point, the initiative is in its beginning stages. Mosaic is currently conducting research, consultation and recruiting people in Toronto and Calgary. Next spring, dialogues will start in Toronto and Calgary. These dialogues will be opportunities for youth from Chinese and Tibetan communities to talk directly. The organizers want youth to use this as a platform to talk about conflict in the two groups’ places of origin and use their perspective as Canadian youths to discuss issues of mutual concern.”*

John Monahan, Executive Director of the Mosaic Institute and Tenzing Dekyikhangsar, Project Manager of the initiative, both stressed to OMNI that the project – generously supported by **Citizenship and Immigration**

**Canada** – will provide the opportunity for Canadians of Tibetan and Chinese descent to come together and identify common, Canadian interests related to Tibet and China using a balanced and fair approach. The dialogue aims to increase levels of cooperation, collaboration, and trust amongst the participants, who will also be called upon to complete a community service project that manifests their shared commitment to constructive acts of global citizenship. **“New Beginnings”** – as the name implies – will create a rare and mutually-respectful space for interested Canadians with connections to either China and Tibet to consider how Canada might successfully advance both its commercial interests in Asia and its long-established commitment to peaceful pluralism and the protection of fundamental human rights.

Following several weeks of community outreach and consultation, the membership of the dialogue’s Steering Committee had been nearly finalized by early July 2012. Planning now begins in earnest for the first public session of the dialogue, which will be held in Spring 2013.

For further information contact:

Tenzing Dekyikhangsar [td@mosaicinstitute.ca](mailto:td@mosaicinstitute.ca) 416-644-6000 ext.610

## Leaders of Mosaic's Sri Lanka Dialogue Raise \$25,000 to Drill Wells

At the conclusion of the Mosaic Institute's "Young Canadians' Peace Dialogue on Sri Lanka" (2009-2011), a core group of approximately twenty (20) dialogue participants formed an informal fundraising organization called "BuildChange" ([www.buildchange.ca](http://www.buildchange.ca)) to support the construction of residential water wells in the Vanni region of Sri Lanka's northeast. With the assistance of the Mosaic Institute, the team organized a "Spring for Wells Gala" on May 4, 2012, where they reached their fundraising goal of \$25,000 (CDN.) The money will go to support a project being run jointly by the Rotary Club of Colombo South and UN Habitat to provide clean, accessible water to former war-affected refugees. This is a remarkable example of how dialogue can spur Canadians to work together to create positive change in the world.



The "BuildChange" Team celebrate their success in raising funds to build water wells in Sri Lanka.

## New Faces at the Mosaic Institute this Summer



Tejas Parasher, Rachel Rawana and Tenzing Dekyikhangsar (l. to r.) are three of the new faces at the Mosaic Institute in Summer

There are some notable new faces at the Mosaic Institute this summer. They include:

**Tenzing Dekyikhangsar:** Tenzing is the Project Manager for our new initiative entitled "New Beginnings: Young Canadians' Peace Dialogue on China and Tibet", which will run until 2014 with the funding support of Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Tenzing came to Canada from Nepal in 2001 and completed his Masters in Political Science and Public/International Affairs at York University in 2011. Previously, Tenzing has worked for the federal and provincial governments as a researcher and policy analyst. He also interned as a research on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) with a Canadian NGO working in Nepal, and has long been an active volunteer working on student and human rights issues. He joined

the Mosaic Institute as a contractor in April 2012.

**Tejas Parasher:** Tejas first began interning with the Mosaic Institute in February 2012 and since the start of the summer has been serving as Program Assistant for the UofMosaic initiative ([www.uofmosaic.ca](http://www.uofmosaic.ca)). Tejas is a fourth-year undergraduate at the University of Toronto, studying Political Science and English. His academic interests are focused on multiculturalism and human rights, and he hopes to pursue further graduate studies in this field. Tejas is currently working to design programming for UofMosaic's 2012-2013 dialogue series on Sri Lanka at UofT (where he will serve as the chapter's co-President) and a separate dialogue on Armenia-Turkey at Ryerson University.

**Rachel Rawana:** Rachel is a Master of Global Affairs candidate at the University of Toronto's Munk School of Global Affairs, and is delighted to be interning at The Mosaic Institute as a part of her program. She completed her Honours B.A. at the University of Western Ontario, specializing in International Relations and minoring in Spanish. She is keenly interested in restorative and reparative transitional justice processes, as she firmly believes that reconciliation has to be both a bottom-up and top-down approach. Rachel greatly appreciates Mosaic's "think and do" attitude, as it has given her the opportunity to apply her academic knowledge in a profoundly practical manner. She is involved with a number of different projects

this summer, including playing a significant role in the coordination of the Institute's "Sri Lanka Tour 2012", through which several young alumni of Mosaic's "Young Canadians' Peace Dialogue on Sri Lanka" will be visiting development projects throughout that country in late July.

**Sara Zeitoun (not pictured):** Sara Zeitoun is the co-founder and Co-President of the UofMosaic Chapter at York University. Sara is a senior undergraduate student at York pursuing a degree in Global Political Studies, and she is an active community leader. Sara began with the UofMosaic in 2011, and was one of the program's delegates to the annual "J Street" conference in Washington, D.C. earlier this year. She is also an active member of the team of students that have formed a fundraising consortium, "RefugeAID", to raise money in support of the work that Doctors without Borders is doing to provide support to Syrian refugees who are flooding into northern Lebanon. Sara is excited to be entering her second year providing leadership to the York chapter, where she hopes to promote more engagement and foster more inter-community goodwill on campus. In the future, Sara hopes to pursue a career in education and community development.

**Tenzing, Tejas, Rachel and Sara join a growing team of contractors and interns who are pivotal to the success of our work. Together with our volunteers, our supporters and our program participants, they are the Mosaic Institute.**

## U of Mosaic Goes “National”



UofMosaic Program Coordinator Lorenzo Vargas (centre) is joined by student volunteers at a UofMosaic event.

The ‘[UofMosaic](#)’ will welcome three new members to its growing family of campus chapters in the fall of 2012.

Following the success of our dialogue work at York University, the University of Toronto, and Ryerson University, in September our network will grow to include chapters at McGill University, Concordia University, and the University of British Columbia. Each of these UofMosaic chapters will explore opportunities for Young Canadians to promote better community relations in Canada as well as peace and development abroad.

New UofMosaic chapters in Montreal and Vancouver are also in the planning stages of

their work for the upcoming school year. We are very lucky to have talented and enthusiastic students leading our new chapters: Amy Tang will be leading the **McGill University** chapter; Alya Koraitem and Darem Aissa will be co-leaders at **Concordia University**; and Raoul Wieland and Cathy Chen will be our student leaders at the **University of British Columbia**. Rather than delving into community-specific dialogues in their first year of operation, these new UofMosaic chapters will convene sessions about general topics related to peacebuilding, diaspora engagement, and international development during the 2012-2013 academic year as a way to “test the waters” and better inform our work in the future.

An initiative of The Mosaic Institute ([www.mosaicinstitute.ca](http://www.mosaicinstitute.ca)) and funded by the generous support of BMO Financial Group, the **UofMosaic** ([www.uofmosaic.ca](http://www.uofmosaic.ca)) is a program to encourage Canadian university students to confront old conflicts, become purveyors of peace on campus, and help strengthen their fellow Canadians’ commitment to fostering peace, pluralism and good government around the world – starting right here at home. For more information about our work, please contact Lorenzo Vargas, the UofMosaic Program Coordinator, at [lv@mosaicinstitute.ca](mailto:lv@mosaicinstitute.ca).

## MOSAIC AT WORK

### Mosaic’s Chairman Joins Fellow Honourees on TVO’s “The Agenda with Steve Paikin”



Vahan Kololian, founding Chairman of the Mosaic Institute

Mosaic Institute Co-Founder and Chairman **Vahan Kololian** (pictured left) was recognized by [Skills for Change](#) as a “[Pioneer for Change](#)” at a special gala event held at the Bell TIFF Lightbox on June 5. His fellow award recipients included the Rt. Hon. Adrienne Clarkson, Dr. Alex Jadad, Navan Chandaria and Toni Silberman. All five award recipients were featured on TVOntario’s “**The Agenda with Steve Paikin**” prior to the awards ceremony, where they compared their experiences of coming to Canada, talked about “giving back”, and exchanged views about the Canada of today and tomorrow.

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