



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence (CPRLV), in collaboration with the Canadian Commission for UNESCO (CCUNESCO), announces the launch of the *What if I was wrong? When we talk, we learn!* awareness campaign for the prevention of violent radicalization.

Montréal, 21 September 2017 –

The Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence (CPRLV) and the Canadian Commission for UNESCO (CCUNESCO) are pleased to announce the launch of the *What if I was wrong? When we talk, we learn!* awareness campaign for the prevention of violent radicalization. This campaign is based on five themes: *I don't fit here, One vision for all, Us against Them, That's none of my business* and *They're all the same*.

The campaign will rally a wide range of actors from the educational, institutional and community organization sectors to develop resilience and critical thinking in adolescents and young adults against the dangers of radicalized and extremist speech.

The issue of radicalization, especially among young people, is a priority for the United Nations, including UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). “While schools unquestionably have a role to play in developing critical thinking in young people and promoting a sense of shared community, we also need to support other spaces for dialogue in our communities. This is precisely the goal of this awareness campaign and the reason why we wish to associate our various networks with it, including our UNESCO Associated Schools and our Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination,” stated CCUNESCO Secretary-General Sébastien Goupil.

This campaign will be deployed throughout Québec and have pan-Canadian and international dimensions. It is intended to promote a spirit of shared community – a form of social cohesion created and experienced locally that results from a concerted effort towards including, welcoming, and integrating everyone. “This campaign clearly demonstrates the full importance of the CPRLV for Montréal and Québec. In the current context, it is more necessary than ever that each one of us, when faced with trite or often hasty opinions stops to ask, *What if I was wrong, [after all]?*” said the Hon. Denis Coderre, Mayor of Montréal.

The awareness campaign, which starts today, consists of many different activities:

- 24 awareness-raising workshops
- 19 activities identified in a guide for teachers and youth workers
- Activities in 542 high schools and 62 CEGEPs (general/vocational colleges) throughout Québec
- Mobilization of 72 municipalities across Canada
- An international art competition (photo, text, short film, song) open to young people 13 – 35 years of age
- Campaign outreach by five partner organizations to all five continents.

“This campaign was conceived by young engaged Quebecers, with CPRLV support. The initiative shows that when we turn to young people, they can not only find creative solutions, but also prove to be essential actors in preventing radicalization leading to violence,” said CPRLV Director Herman Deparice-Okomba.

See www.whatifiwaswrong.org for complete information about the campaign.

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INVITATION – PRESS CONFERENCE

PRESS CONFERENCE : THURSDAY 21 SEPTEMBER

The Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence (CPRLV) and the Canadian Commission for UNESCO (CCUNESCO) invite you to a news conference for the launch of the *What if I was wrong? When we talk, we learn!* Awareness-raising campaign for the prevention of violent radicalization.

Date: Thursday, 21 September

Time: 10 am

Place: BAnQ Vieux-Montréal, 535 Avenue Viger E, Montréal, QC H2L 2P3

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