



THE CANADIAN
BAR ASSOCIATION
L'ASSOCIATION DU
BARREAU CANADIEN

April 1, 2014

Via email: minister@acdi-cida.gc.ca

The Honourable Christian Paradis, P.C., LL.B., M.P.
Minister of International Development
International Cooperation
Place du Centre, 12th Floor
200 Promenade du Portage
Mail Stop:MIN
Gatineau, QC K1A 0G4

Dear Minister:

Re: International Youth Internship Program

Following up on the February 6, 2014 letter forwarded to you by Minister Baird, sent from Canadian Bar Association President Fred Headon, I am writing on behalf of the Young Lawyers— Canadian Bar Association (YL-CBA) to support the International Youth Internship Program (IYIP) and to request that the Canadian government renew and continue this important program.

The YL-CBA comprises CBA members who are under the age of 40 or who have been called to the Bar for 10 years or less. The YL-CBA promotes the interests of young lawyers and Quebec notaries. Young lawyers in Canada today face high rates of unemployment and what has been characterized as an “articling crisis” for new law graduates. This is not just a problem for young lawyers. It is a problem for all Canadians, as significant public funding has been invested in our education.

I gratefully acknowledge your government’s commitment to helping youth gain experience through international development activities articulated by Acting Deputy Minister of Development Paul Samson in his February response to Mr. Headon. Recent law graduates are promising young Canadians who have a great deal to offer both domestically and abroad, and on whom large sums of public money have already been spent through funding of their post-secondary education. Supporting the IYIP allows the government a fiscally and globally responsible opportunity to realize on this investment and to make good use of young lawyers’ skills to the advantage and benefit of Canada’s partners abroad.

Since 2002, the CBA has placed more than 100 young Canadian lawyers in internships abroad through its Young Lawyers Internship Program (YLIP), with funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development under IYIP. Through YLIP, the CBA has provided these young lawyers with the opportunity to employ their skills to support partners in developing countries. The CBA interns have supported improvements in governance, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. They have worked to protect and promote human rights and environmental justice, while gaining unparalleled international experience that they then bring back to Canada.

I reiterate that YLIP provides excellent value for money. The benefits to the participants, and the many they touch during and after their internships, are of tremendous value to Canada. For \$15,000, a young Canadian lawyer who would otherwise be unemployed or underemployed has a meaningful work experience that is valued by future employers.

The Government of Canada could not ask for a better return on investment than that consistently made by the IYIP. Former YLIP participants have returned from their internships to work for United Nations peacekeeping missions, the World Bank's legal department, Canadian law firms and organizations such as the International Development Research Centre and Pro Bono Law Alberta.

I urge you to continue the IYIP program.

Yours truly,

(original signed by Rebecca Bromwich for Lisa Barnet)

Lisa Barnet
Chair, Young Lawyers – Canadian Bar Association

cc. Fred Headon, President, CBA