

CORI

Country of origin research and information

International Conference 10th and 11th June 2010

Challenges and Commonalities in Providing Objective
Evidence for Refugee Status Determination



The event

CORI is hosting a two day conference on 10th and 11th June 2010, drawing together experts and practitioners involved with providing objective evidence within RSD to discuss 'Challenges and Commonalities in Providing Objective Evidence for Refugee Status Determination'.

This will be an opportunity for academics, experts, legal and NGO professionals to debate;

- Challenges in producing, assessing and applying objective evidence
- Commonalities between the professional groups providing objective evidence
- Best practice
- Professional standards (as academic, as expert)
- Paradigm clashes between the standards, assumptions and expectations of academic disciplines and the nature of evidence as required in a legal context
- Credibility, impartiality, objectivity

The conference will explore key issues, challenges and commonalities between the following professionals groups in providing and applying objective evidence;

- Language experts
- COI Researchers
- Country experts
- Medical experts
- Psychological experts
- Legal Representatives
- Judges

Objective evidence

Objective evidence is used to determine whether or not a person's fear of persecution is *well founded*. The decision making process requires analysis and opinion from country, medical, psychological and language experts in order to assess the validity of an applicants claim for refugee status. Objective Evidence is used to ascertain the credibility of a claimant, the plausibility of a claimant's testimony, assess risk on return and in considering whether there are internal flight alternatives.

Country of Origin Information (COI) Research

COI researchers collate legally relevant information on conditions in countries of origin from publicly available sources, covering human rights, legal provisions, politics, culture, society, religion and healthcare.

Country expertise

Professionals (academics, lawyers, journalists, etc) with an in-depth knowledge on thematic issues in a country of origin, based on first hand experience, are called on to provide analysis of conditions, systems, practices and procedures in the country of origin.

Medical expertise

Doctors are called on to provide an opinion on the degree of consistency between an individual's scars and injuries and the means of torture or harm reported by the individual.

Psychological expertise

Psychologists and Psychiatrists are called on to provide an opinion on whether an applicants mental condition is consistent with having suffered specific types of harm, the impact of trauma on memory and disclosure and whether an applicant should be removed from detention and fast track processes.

Linguistic expertise

Linguists are called on to provide an opinion on which language(s) and dialect an applicant speaks and on this basis, whether or not an applicant is of the ethnic group or nationality that he/she claims.

Speakers

Prof. Guy Goodwin-Gill, University of Oxford, Keynote on 10th June

Suzanne Duff, Head of RSD, UNHCR, Keynote on 11th June

Dr Christopher McDowell, Member of the IAGCI, Reader in International Politics, City University

Beatrice Ureche, Protection Officer, UNHCR (Geneva)

Roland Schilling, UK Representative of the Office of the United Nation's High Commissioner for Refugees

Anna Ladurner, Researcher, ACCORD (Austria)

Beth Collier, Director, CORI

Richard Lederle, Head of Home Office COIS

Prof. Anthony Good, School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh

Dr Alan George, University of Oxford

Dr John Campbell, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, SOAS

Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers, School of Social Sciences, Roehampton University

Nick Oakeshott, Head of Law, Asylum Aid

Colin Yeo, Barrister, Renaissance Chambers

David Rhys Jones, Independent Consultant

Justice Richard McKee, Senior Immigration Judge

Justice John MacDonald, Senior Immigration Judge

Prof. Peter Patrick, Department of Language and Linguistics, University of Essex

Mr Brian Allen, Independent Language Expert

Dr Maaïke Verrips, Director, De Taal Studio (Netherlands)

Dr Al Wer, Department of Language and Linguistics, University of Essex

Pia Enevi, General Manager, Sprakab (Sweden)

Dr David Bell, Consultant Psychiatrist, Tavistock Clinic

Dr Jane Herlihy, Director, Centre for the Study of Emotion and Law

Helen Bamber, Founder and Director, The Helen Bamber Foundation

Dr Angela Burnett, Lead Clinician, Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture

Prof. Geoff Gilbert, Editor-in-Chief, IJRL; School of Law and Human Rights Centre, University of Essex

Please see the events page on our website for speaker biographies <http://www.cori.org.uk/3.html>

Who should attend

This conference will be of interest to all stakeholders to Refugee Status Determination, particularly legal practitioners, decision makers, doctors, psychologists, psychiatrists, COI researchers, linguistic, country and thematic experts, NGO's, professionals and students in the fields of Human Rights, Law, Anthropology, Medicine, Psychology, Politics, Sociology, Linguistics, Religion and Gender.

Conference programme

The structure of both days will include;

- two panel sessions made up of single professional groups discussing the key issues and challenges of providing objective evidence
- two workshops exploring lawyers and judges' perspectives
- a final multi-stakeholder panel session discussing commonalities between the professional groups and areas where professionalism can be strengthened

The conference will be held at the University of Westminster, New Cavendish Street, W1W 6UW between 9.30am (registration opens 9.00am) and 5.30pm on the 10th and between 9.30am and 5.30pm on 11th June 2010.

Challenges and Commonalities in Providing Objective Evidence for Refugee Status Determination

Date: 10th and 11th June 2010
Time: 9.30am -5.30pm
Venue: University of Westminster, New Cavendish Street, W1W 6UW
Travel: Nearest tubes: Warren Street, Goodge Street, Regents Park, Euston, Great Portland Street, Oxford Street
 Train: Euston
CPD: Immigration Advisors and Psychiatrists can claim CPD hours for this event*

Conference fee		2 Days	1 Day
(Includes lunch and refreshments on both days)	Statutory or commercial	£250	£175
	Academic or NGO	£155	£100
	RCO/Student/unwaged	£60	£45

For further information on speakers and the conference programme visit www.cori.org.uk

Day 1		Day 2
Registration	9.00 – 9.30	
Chairs Welcome	9.30 – 9.40	Chairs Introduction
Keynote 1 Prof. Guy Goodwin-Gill (Alls Souls College, University of Oxford)	9.40 – 10.30	Keynote 2 Susanne Duff, (Head of Refugee Status Determination, UNHCR)
Tea Break	10.30 – 10.45	Tea Break
Panel 1: Country of Origin Information Research <i>Chair – Dr Chris McDowell (City University and member of Independent Advisory Group on Country Information)</i> Key issues and challenges in providing Country of Origin Information (COI) research as objective evidence Panellists: Anna Ladurner, Researcher, ACCORD (Austria) Richard Lederle, Head of Home Office Country of Origin Information Service (COIS) Beatrice Ureche, Protection Officer, UNHCR (Geneva) Beth Collier, Director, CORI	10.45 – 12.15	Panel 3: Language Expertise <i>Chair – Prof. Peter Patrick, (University of Essex) (Sociolinguistic expert)</i> Key issues and challenges in providing linguistic analysis, language expertise and reports as objective evidence Panellists: Dr Verrips, De Taal Studios (Psycho and sociolinguistic expert) (Netherlands) Brian Allen, Independent (Bajuni expert) Dr Al Wer, University of Essex (Arabic expert) Pia Enevi, Sprakab (Sweden)
Lunch	12.15 – 1.15	Lunch
Panel 2: Country Expertise <i>Chair - Prof. Anthony Good (University of Edinburgh) (Country expert, Sri Lanka and South India)</i> Key issues and challenges in providing country expertise and reports as objective evidence Panellists: Dr John Campbell, SOAS (Country expert: Eritrea, Ethiopia) Dr Alan George (Country expert: Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Yemen) Dr. Stephanie Schwandner-Sievers (Country expert: Albania and Kosovo)	1.15 – 2.55	Panel 4: Medical and Psychological Expertise <i>Chair – Dr David Bell, Consultant Psychiatrist, Tavistock Clinic</i> Key issues and challenges in providing medical and psychological expertise and reports as objective evidence Panellists: Helen Bamber, OBE, Helen Bamber Foundation (Founder and Director) Dr Jane Herlihy, Centre for the Study of Emotion and Law (Chartered Clinical Psychologist) Dr Angela Burnett, Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture (GP & Lead clinician)
Tea break	2.55 – 3.10	Tea break
Workshops; Lawyers perspectives : Country Evidence Discussing legal requirements from COI Research and Country reports as objective evidence, the commissioning of reports and common problems encountered. Lead by: Nick Oakeshott, Head of Law, Asylum Aid Judges Perspectives: Country evidence Challenges in assessing objective evidence, nature of evidence, expertise and credibility Lead by: Justice John MacDonald, Senior Immigration Judge	3.10 – 4.10	Workshops; Lawyers perspectives: Language/Medical/Psychological evidence Discussing legal requirements from Linguistic, Medical and Psychological reports as objective evidence, the commissioning of reports and common problems encountered. Lead by: Colin Yeo, Renaissance Chambers and David Rhys Jones, Independent Consultant Judges Perspectives: Language/Medical/ Psychological evidence Challenges in assessing objective evidence, nature of evidence, expertise and credibility Lead by: Justice Richard McKee, Senior Immigration Judge
Commonalities: Chair - Roland Schilling, UK Representative of the Office of the United Nation's High Commissioner for Refugees Multi-stakeholder panel (COI Researcher, Country Expert, Legal Representative and Judge) and floor discussion on commonalities between the tasks of providing COI Research and Country expertise as objective evidence and areas where professionalism can be strengthened. Panellists: Professor Anthony Good, Beatrice Ureche, Nick Oakeshott, Justice John MacDonald	4.10 – 5.25	Commonalities: Chair - Prof. Geoff Gilbert, University of Essex Multi-stakeholder panel (Language Expert, Medical Expert, Psychological Expert, Legal Representative and Judge) and floor discussion on commonalities between the tasks of providing Language, Medical and Psychological expertise as objective evidence and areas where professionalism can be strengthened. Panellists: Professor Peter Patrick, Dr Angela Burnett, Colin Yeo, Justice Richard McKee
Close	5.25 – 5.30	Close

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► How to Book

Post this form to CORI, PO Box 53697, London, SE24 4AS

Email this form to conference@cori.org.uk

► Your details (Please complete a new form for each delegate. Photocopies are acceptable)

Prof. Dr. Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss
(Please circle)

First name:

Surname:

Job title:

Organisation:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone:

E-mail:

Please write your address clearly as confirmation will be sent by e-mail.

Please specify any dietary or access requirements:

This form must be signed by the delegate or an authorised person. By signing this form you are accepting the terms and conditions below

Name:

Signature:

Date:

► Payment

Conference fee
(Includes lunch and refreshments for each day)
Please tick

	2 days		1 day	
Statutory or Commercial	£250	<input type="checkbox"/>	£175	<input type="checkbox"/>
Academic or NGO	£155	<input type="checkbox"/>	£100	<input type="checkbox"/>
RCO/Student	£60	<input type="checkbox"/>	£45	<input type="checkbox"/>

By Cheque A cheque for [] is enclosed. Please make cheques payable to 'CORI'.

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Your BACS reference: []
Account number: 81229259
Sort code: 60-03-36

By electronic transfer Please use the delegate name as the reference and confirm payment by email to conference@cori.org.uk

Account number: 81229259
Sort code: 60-03-36
IBAN: GB44NWBK60033681229259
SWIFT/BIC: NWBKGB2L

Please tick if you require a certificate of attendance

Workshops: Please indicate your first preference for each day of attendance. If a workshop is over-subscribed you may be allocated your second preference

Day 1: Country Evidence

Workshop 1 Lawyers Perspective

Workshop 2 Judges Perspective

Day 2: Linguistic, Medical and Psychological Evidence

Workshop 3 Lawyers Perspective

Workshop 4 Judges Perspective

Terms and Conditions

Bookings are non refundable, however substitute delegates are welcome. Programme details are subject to change. In the event of cancellation a full refund will be given, CORI will not be liable for any associated costs such as travel and accommodation, delegates are advised to ensure that their insurance covers any associated costs.

Confirmation of booking

All bookings will be confirmed by email

*CPD

Royal College of Psychiatrists

6 hours per day can be claimed for this event subject to peer group approval

OISC

Immigration advisors may claim CPD hours for this event

For further information email conference@cori.org.uk