

International rights symposium this week

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More than 150 Canadian and international progressives – including 35 UFCW Canada member activists, officers, and staff – will meet Nov. 19-21 in Ottawa to discuss how labour rights are a critical component of human rights, helping to protect and promote democracy as well as the social and economic well-being of citizens.

“With Wal-Mart’s recent closure of its unionized Tire & Lube Express location in Gatineau, Que., the symposium couldn’t be timelier,” says UFCW Canada National President Wayne Hanley. “It is very important for unions from every aspect of the workforce to be standing up together and speaking with one voice on this very important issue. Whether we represent teachers, grocery clerks, public servants, or police officers, we all have an interest in advancing labour rights and the standard of living for working families.”

The 2008 *Labour Rights are Human Rights International Symposium*, to be held at the Ottawa Marriott Hotel, is sponsored by four national unions – UFCW Canada, the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE), the Canadian Teachers’ Federation (CTF), and the Canadian Police Association (CPA) – that together represent more than a million workers in Canada.

The three-day conference features several notable speakers – including Elaine Bernard, executive director of the *Labor and Worklife Program* at Harvard University – and focuses on seven sessions dedicated to discussing advocacy challenges and fostering positive coordinated action.