



## **Rights Review Guidelines for Conducting Interviews**

1. Any effective interview requires adequate preparation.
2. Ensure that you thoroughly research the issues at hand ahead of the interview.
  - a. Research the individual's specific role and previous work accomplishments.
  - b. If the person you are interviewing works for an organization, ensure that you understand the mandate of the organization and the projects it is involved in.
  - c. If the focus of your interview is a report or project undertaken by the interviewee, make sure you read the author's work and understand the issues.
  - d. If you are interviewing an individual as part of an event, coordinate and communicate with the people organizing the event.
3. Based on your preliminary research, create a list of questions you would like to ask your interviewee. Keep in mind the time limitations, and prioritize key questions you want to have answered.
4. Organize your questions in a logical order, so that related questions come after one another (instead of jumping back and forth between topics).
5. While you should prepare questions and the structure of the interview in advance, keep them as a general guide and be prepared to improvise based on how the interview progresses.
6. Take an accurate record of what is said during the interview. In most cases, there will not be an opportunity to follow up with the interviewee, and it is important that you do not misrepresent any statements or opinions in your article. If the interviewee agrees, you may audio record the interview to ensure accuracy. However, you should be prepared to conduct the interview regardless.

## **Sample Interview Questions**

1. How did you get involved in the field of human rights?
2. What motivates you to continue in this area of work?
3. What accomplishment are you most proud of?
4. Of the many cases you've worked on, what is one that is particularly important to you, and why?
5. What is a critical issue or challenge facing human rights lawyers today?
6. What is the most important case or development to watch in the near future?
7. What was the most important case or development in your field in the last decade? How has it shaped your approach to your work?

- 8.** In your opinion, are conflicts and crises facing the world today fundamentally different than those of the past ten or twenty years? How has your organization adjusted the way it carries out its work to reflect these new realities?
- 9.** What is Canada's role in encouraging a path to resolution [for the relevant issue]?
- 10.** How has your organization worked to raise the profile of this issue, and what role are they playing to prevent further conflict?
- 11.** How can members of the international community raise the profile of this situation and work toward a solution?
- 12.** Do you see an overall positive trajectory [for the protection of a particular human right]?
- 13.** If you could give law students who wish to work in the field of international human rights one piece of advice, what would it be?