

# ECDC NEWS

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## **ECDC Announces its 15<sup>th</sup> National Conference to be held in Arlington, VA**

Arlington, VA –The Ethiopian Community Development Council, Inc. (ECDC) will host its 15<sup>th</sup> national conference on May 4-6, 2009 at the Holiday Inn Arlington in Arlington, VA. This year's conference theme, *The Future of African Refugees and Immigrants: A Time for New Thinking*, will explore many pressing African refugee and immigrant issues.

This year's conference theme is The Future of African Refugees and Immigrants: A Time for New Thinking. The theme represents a past year of progress and concern about African refugees overseas and newcomers to the U.S. Only 8,935 African refugees were resettled in FY 2008 due primarily to DNA testing. Today, family reunion for thousands of African refugees is in jeopardy. With the U.S. economy in recession, employment for newcomers to the country will take on new challenges to help them become and remain self-sufficient. Ongoing and new conflicts will continue to pose threats to African refugees on the continent...from the DRC to Somalia, South Africa to Zimbabwe. Refugees in Africa as well as newcomers here remain vulnerable, and new ways of thinking about their future and how best to assist them are needed.

The conference typically attracts over 250 people from African community-based organizations; federal, state, and local government agencies; refugee service providers; think tanks; academia; and African newcomers.

For information on conference registration fees, lodging arrangements and other program details, please call Kate Vandermade at (703) 685-0510 ext.219, or visit us on the Web at: [www.ecdcinternational.org](http://www.ecdcinternational.org).

The Ethiopian Community Development Council (ECDC) is a community-based, non-profit organization that is dedicated to resettling refugees, promoting cultural, educational, and socio-economic development in the refugee community in the United States, and conducting humanitarian and development programs in the Horn of Africa. Since 1983, ECDC has worked to help establish stronger and more culturally appropriate services for the United States refugee community and continues to pursue programs that will help newcomers become productive members of their new American communities.

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