UCCLA Media Release - Internee descendant becomes honourary chair of National Redress Council

For Immediate Release (Ottawa, 4 September 2007)

Following the recent death of the last known survivor of Canada's first national internment operations, Mary Manko Haskett, 98, who was only six years old when she and the rest of the Manko family were confined at the Spirit Lake concentration camp, in Quebec's Abitibi region, her daughter, Ms. Fran Haskett, has agreed to take on her mother's role as honourary chair of the National Redress Council of the Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Association.

Commenting on Ms Haskett's willingness to take on this responsibility, UCCLA's chairman, John B. Gregorovich, said:

" We have always been conscious of how important it is to take into consideration the sentiments of the descendants of those unfortunates who were interned without just cause during Canada's first national internment operations. They were forced to do heavy labour for the profit of their jailers and suffered other state-sanctioned indignities, including the confiscation of their wealth and disenfranchisement. For several years two survivors of that unfortunate episode in Canadian history were the co-chairs of UCCLA's National Redress Council. Now that the last known survivor has passed away, without a timely and honourable settlement having been reached, we are very pleased that Mary's daughter, Fran, has stepped up to assume this role. Fran has been a consistent supporter of UCCLA's campaign for recognition, restitution and reconciliation and so we welcome her involvement in this role. We hope this government will soon meet its legal obligation to negotiate a settlement with our community's designated representatives, as they are required to do under the terms of Bill C 331 - The Internment of Persons of Ukrainian Origin Recognition Act, which received Royal Assent in November 2005."