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**Ipsos Reid**

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## **Canadians Choose Obama's Inauguration (31%), H1N1 Flu (26%), Economic Recession (22%) as Biggest News Stories of 2009**

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**Toronto, ON** – 2009 was not a year that was short on news, and wide variety of news at that: the economy, politics, pop culture, health, war, climate change, and sundry other topics. Through an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of Canwest News Service and Global Television, Canadians have weighed in and have chosen the top news stories of the year from among seventeen possible options.

One in three (31%) Canadians say that the swearing in of Barack Obama, America's first black President, was the biggest news story of 2009. Further, one quarter (26%) say that the H1N1 (swine flu) pandemic was the biggest news story of the year, while only slightly fewer (22%) believe that the economic recession was the biggest news story.

The impact of the 'great recession' on the world, and the pandemonium that the H1N1 pandemic instilled in governments near and far would probably have made either of these stories likely candidates for the top-prize had they not been up against each other – or Obamamania. But the historic significance of electing a black President to be commander-in-

chief of a country that has had such a long struggle of racial inequality appears to be the most monumental news story of the year for a plurality of Canadians.

Other Canadians, to a lesser extent, chose the death of Michael Jackson (7%) as the top news story of the year, followed by fraud on Wall Street (4%), climate change/weather (2%), the war in Afghanistan (2%), President Obama's health care plan (2%), terrorism (1%), the Olympics/Torch Relay (1%), Tiger Woods (1%), Susan Boyle (1%) or some other event (1%).

*These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on December 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009, on behalf of Canwest News Service and Global National. For this survey, a national sample of 1,038 adults from Ipsos' Canadian online panel was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100% response rate would have an estimated margin of error of +/-3.1 percentage points 19 times out of 20 of what the results would have been had the entire population of adults in Canada been polled. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.*

## ***Not all Canadians Believe Obama's Inauguration Was the Top News Story...***

While a plurality of Canadians indicate that the swearing in of Barack Obama as the first black President in the United States was the biggest news story of the year (31%), not all Canadians place it ahead of the H1N1 swine flu pandemic (26%):

- Quebecers were more likely to say that the H1N1 (33%) was the top news story of the year than the inauguration of President Obama (27%).



- Those with kids in the household were over twice as likely (46%) as those without (22%) to name H1N1 as the top news story of the year; conversely, those without kids (33%) were significantly more likely than those with kids (19%) to say that Obama's inauguration was tops.
- Interestingly, those whose family earns between \$25K and \$50K were more likely to choose the H1N1 (31%) as the top news story than Obama's inauguration (26%).
- Women were slightly more likely to choose H1N1 (34%) over Obama (32%), but men were twice as likely to choose the President's inauguration (30%) over the H1N1 pandemic (16%).
- Canadians aged 18 to 34 were much more likely to say that they believe H1N1 was the top news story (37%), than Obama's inauguration (21%) or the economic recession (21%).

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