



THE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES  
LE CONSEIL CANADIEN DES ÉGLISES

16 November 2011

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper

Prime Minister  
Prime Minister's Office  
Langevin Block 80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A3  
Canada

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Dear Prime Minister Harper,

I am writing to call your attention to a remarkable Canadian Interfaith collaborative effort on climate.

Drawing on the relationships and experience of organizing a Religious Leaders' Summit in 2010 on the occasion of the G8 meetings in Canada, faith communities have come together to reflect on the spiritual roots of the current challenge of climate justice. After extensive consultations and meetings, Canadian faith communities have signed a *Canadian Interfaith Call for Leadership and Action on Climate Change*.

In the words of the Call, "religious traditions uphold the nobility of the human spirit, calling on us to seek moderation and service to the common good..." We "seek coherence between our beliefs and our actions, so that our lives and consumption habits reflect our relationship with the rest of humanity and the Earth itself."

The call for leadership and action goes out to faith communities themselves, civil society, industry, businesses, and governments. We all need to "put the long-term interest of humanity and the planet ahead of short-term economic and national concerns; ...the best interests of one group or nation are served by pursuing the best interests of all."

As the leader of the Government of Canada, the upcoming 17<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP17) in South Africa is an opportunity for the Canadian government to demonstrate leadership and action.

Accordingly, faith communities together urge you to adopt the following policy goals:

- Take collective action by signing and implementing a binding international agreement that commits nations to reduce carbon emissions and set fair and clear targets to ensure that global average temperatures stay below a 2° Centigrade increase from pre-industrial levels;
- Demonstrate national responsibility by committing to national carbon emission targets and a renewable energy policy designed to achieve sustainability; and
- Implement climate justice by contributing public funds to assist the poorest and most affected countries to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.

We recognize the complexities of balancing priorities and commitments. Yet, “we stand ready to work alongside you to promote a future of security, prosperity, and justice – for humankind, and the whole of creation.”

To that end, we ask for an opportunity for leaders of Canadian faith committees to meet with you or your delegate to learn more about what faith communities are doing, and together demonstrate leadership and action in Canada to preserve and safeguard future generations of life.

With continued prayers for you and your government, sincerely,



The Rev. Dr. Karen Hamilton  
General Secretary  
The Canadian Council of Churches

Encl: *The Canadian Interfaith Call for Leadership and Action on Climate Change*

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