



4 November 2015

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Re: On Promoting Climate Justice and Ending Poverty in Canada

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,

Congratulations on becoming Canada's 23rd Prime Minister. You may remember meeting with a delegation from The Canadian Council of Churches in May 2014. May you and your ministers govern with wisdom and a commitment to justice and fairness for all.

I write to commend to you the attached statement on climate justice and poverty signed and endorsed by the denominational leaders of members of The Canadian Council of Churches – 25 member denominations representing more than 85% of the Christians in Canada – along with endorsements from leaders of many faith communities and faith-based organizations in Canada.

Today we understand the twin challenges of climate and poverty are linked by a spiritual, moral and ethical human crisis: how will Canadians act as a good neighbour in both the natural and human communities since in the long run the health of one depends on the health of the other?

Through religious institutions we aspire to model and teach faithful living in response to a divine imperative of love and care for all. We cherish opportunities to share the beliefs and values that come from our scriptures and guide us: a balanced relationship between people and the environment, an ethic of care for the poor and disadvantaged, and support for the well-being of all.

We therefore respectfully call upon our government to

- develop a Federal plan for leadership on climate that connects and coordinates federal, provincial and municipal jurisdictions and provides global leadership,
- develop, legislate and implement a federal plan for poverty elimination that complements provincial and territorial plans, and
- respond fully to those recommendations directed to government in the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools (TRC).

In addition, The Canadian Council of Churches co-organized with the Church of Sweden a conference on the *Future of Life in the Arctic – The Impact of Climate Change. Indigenous and Religious Perspectives*. Meeting on Sami Territory in Sweden, October 5-8 2015, the participants attending the conference appealed to the leaders and representatives of Indigenous Peoples and faith communities to call on our public representatives to take brave action and make bold decisions on promoting climate justice.

As President of The Canadian Council of Churches I also commend the Storforsen Appeal to you and have attached it here.

Prime Minister Trudeau, please be assured that churches across Canada hold you and your government in our prayers.



Canon Dr. Alyson Barnett-Cowan
President

Attachments:

On Promoting Climate Justice and Ending Poverty in Canada: Faith Communities in Canada Speak Out. September 2015, Updated November 2015.

Appeal to the leaders and representatives of Indigenous Peoples and faith communities Storforsen, Sweden. October 2015.

Cc: Right Honourable Stephen Harper, M.P., Leader of the Official Opposition
Thomas Mulcair, M.P., Leader of the New Democratic Party of Canada
Rhéal Fortin, M.P., Leader of the Bloc Québécois
Elisabeth May, M.P., Leader of the Green Party of Canada

Catherine McKenna, M.P., Minister of Environment and Climate Change
Jean-Yves Duclos, M.P., Minister of Families, Children, Social Development
Carolyn Bennett, M.P., Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs

The Canadian Council of Churches is the broadest and most inclusive ecumenical body in the world, now representing 25 denominations of Anglican; Evangelical; Free Church; Eastern Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox; Protestant; and Catholic traditions. Together we represent more than 85% of the Christians in Canada. The Canadian Council of Churches was founded in 1944.