



November 21, 2012

The Honourable Peter Kent
Minister of the Environment
Member of Parliament for Thornhill (Ontario)
Les Terrasses de la Chaudière
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Re: *COP 18 in Doha*

Dear Minister,

We write to you as you prepare for the federal government's participation in the sessions of the *18th Conference of the Parties (COP18) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* in Doha, Qatar, from November 26 to December 7, 2012.

Members of our communities appreciated the time you took to visit with then Moderator Mardi Tindal (United Church of Canada), General Secretary Willard Metzger (Mennonite Church Canada) and myself, Joy Kennedy, Chair of the Commission on Justice and Peace of The Canadian Council of Churches, in Durban. Likewise, we were pleased to meet with your Senior Policy Advisor, Monica Kugelmass, and her colleagues during our May 2012 Governing Board meetings in Ottawa. The Justice and Peace Commission of the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) now requests an opportunity to continue the dialogue with you. We want to broaden the conversation and better understand your view of Canada's role in addressing climate change.

The Canadian Interfaith Call for Action and Leadership

You will remember that the *Canadian Interfaith Call* was signed by the leaders of over 60 faith

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communities and ecumenical and interfaith organizations, and represents the first time such a large number of faith communities in Canada had spoken together on the crucial question of climate change. Other religious bodies, which although had not been prepared to sign on to specific requests of the Interfaith Call, do however echo our profound ethical concerns about Climate Change, and share our convictions that a much more serious commitment to the environment is being asked of Canada at the present time.

In Durban, you had expressed your agreement with the main message of the Call, which included three requests of the Government of Canada:

- Take collective action by signing and implementing a binding international agreement that commits nations to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and set fair and clear targets to ensure that global average temperatures stay below a 2° Celsius increase from pre-industrial levels;
- Demonstrate national responsibility by committing to national GHG emission targets and a national renewable energy policy designed to achieve sustainability; and
- Implement climate justice, by playing a constructive role in the design of the Green Climate Fund under United Nations governance, and by contributing public funds to assist the poorest and most affected countries to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.

It is Time for All Canadians to Move to Achieve Better Results

Since the conversation in Durban, you announced that the Government of Canada has invoked its right to withdraw from the Kyoto Protocol. The federal budget indicates that funding for the National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy is discontinued. In addition, we read in Environment Canada's 2012 assessment that additional measures are needed to reduce Canadian emissions by 113 Megatonnes (Mt) to achieve the 2020 target of at least 17 percent below the 2005 emission level, or 607 Mt.

Mr. Minister, we are firmly convinced it is time for all Canadians, including industries as well as provincial and municipal governments, under the leadership of our federal government to move to achieve better results if climate change impacts are to be curtailed. We believe we now need to ask more of you so that Canada can renew international leadership and federal government actions which address climate change. We urge that Canada develop:

1. **A credible plan to reach Canada's target of 17% below the 2005 emission level by 2020:** Recent analysis from *Resources for the Future* shows that the U.S. is likely on track to meet its own domestic 2020 target. Can Canada propose anything less?
2. **Financial commitment for climate justice in developing countries:** We would propose that Canada announce that the remaining funds in the "fast start" funding for climate

adaptation and mitigation in developing countries (approximately \$200M shortfall) will be disbursed as new grants for adaptation efforts in the poorest countries. Canada can also use the opportunity of the Doha negotiations to announce an enhanced commitment to financing climate action in developing countries for the 2013-2020 period.

3. **A Canadian energy plan** for renewable and non-renewable sources of energy that ensures a sustainable and healthy future for Canada.

The Justice and Peace Commission of the Canadian Council of Churches is collaborating with the Rev. Marta Benavides from El Salvador in COP18. We will educate our communities with her reports from this event, and these reports could be supplemented by your own views and Canada's firm commitments to greater action and leadership.

The Book of Genesis teaches that Creation in all its beauty and goodness has been entrusted to the care of humanity (Genesis 1.28-31). The October 2011 *Canadian Interfaith Call to Leadership and Action* emphasized that "we have a moral imperative to act." One year later, this Commission of the Canadian Council Churches remains convinced of the need for all Canadians to move forward in protecting the environment and resolving the moral and ethical issues associated with climate change.

Please be assured of our prayers for you and your colleagues, leaders in the Government of Canada,



Joy Kennedy
Chair, Commission on Justice and Peace

Cc Michelle Rempel, Parliamentary Secretary
Megan Leslie, Environment Critic, New Democratic Party of Canada
Kirsty Duncan, Environment Critic, Liberal Party of Canada
Maria Mourani, Environment Critic, Bloc Québécois
Members of the All-Party Climate Change Caucus
Monica Kugelmass, Senior Policy Advisor
Major Jim Champ, President, The Canadian Council of Churches
Rev. Marta Benavides, Delegate to COP18