



Friday, August 4, 2006

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

Dear Prime Minister Stephen Harper,

The Canadian Unitarian Council's (CUC) policy on peace and global security has, as its overarching goals, the prevention of wars and violent conflict, and the promotion of respect for international law and the use of dialogue, negotiation, mediation, co-operation and compromise as the principal tools for resolving conflict. As President of the CUC, I must urge you to maintain an even and balanced approach in dealing with the situation in the Middle East. The tragedy that is unfolding in Lebanon is totally unacceptable, and the death and suffering endured there must be on the conscience of every human being.

The CUC is concerned about the position of our new minority government that clearly favours one side over the other. In so doing, the opportunity for Canada to mediate effectively in this conflict is severely compromised. To be a valuable and respected player, Canada needs to return to its principled and fair-minded approach to situations such as this one.

We urge the Canadian government to do everything in its power to put into effect an immediate ceasefire in Lebanon and Gaza. With every minute that goes by, more innocent civilians are killed and injured, the basic infrastructure for daily living is destroyed, and hostilities between Israel and Lebanon increase. Until a ceasefire can be established, we urge you to pressure all parties involved to protect innocent civilians and respect international law. Under your leadership, may Canada lead the way in using dialogue, negotiation, mediation, cooperation and compromise as the principle tools for resolving this conflict.





Yours sincerely,

Vyda Ng
President,
Canadian Unitarian Council

Cc: The Honourable Peter MacKay, Minister of Foreign Affairs
The Honourable Keith Martin, Liberal Foreign Affairs Critic
Ms. Caroline St-Hilaire, Bloc Québécois Coopération internationale
Ms. Francine Lalonde, Bloc Québécois Affaires étrangères
Mr. Wayne Marston, NDP Foreign Affairs Deputy Critic (for Human Rights)
The Honourable Dawn Black, NDP Defence and Peace Advocacy
The Honourable Alexa McDonough, NDP Foreign Affairs Critic/ International Cooperation
The Honourable John McNee, United Nations Ambassador for Canada