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**CURRENT SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY LETTERS,
EVENTS, TOPICS & DISCUSSION
SEPTEMBER 2009**



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G8 SUMMIT IN L'AQUILA ITALY, JULY 8 -10, 2009

July 7, 2009

The Right Honourable Steven Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister,

RE: G8 Summit in L' Aquila Italy, July 8 -10, 2009

The World Wildlife Fund recently (June 2009) published a G8 Scorecard Report which ranks Canada last. This is shocking and cause for alarm. We know that Canada, as one of the relatively rich countries, must do our part. We urge you to take steps immediately to address and respond to each of the following points raised in this report concerning Canada's performance:

1. Canada has very high emission rates per capita compared to the average of industrialized countries, despite our high share of hydropower;
2. Canada has markedly increasing emissions in most sectors; projections have recently been corrected upwards;

3. Canada is expanding energy-intensive un-conventional oil development (tar sands); neither provincial nor planned federal regulation will reduce overall emissions;
4. Canada has no official/enforceable climate plan; the proposed national plan does not even aim for compliance with Kyoto target and
5. Canada has effectively reneged on Kyoto target – federal government’s proposed plan (released 26.04.2007) that aims for 20 % reduction below 2006 emission levels by 2020, i.e. 11 % above the Kyoto target in 2020; out of compliance with federal law requiring development of a plan to meet Kyoto obligations.

The last point is particularly shameful, as not only are we seen to be laggards, Canada’s policies and commitments do not measure up to our international commitments.

We strongly urge and support you to be bold, to demonstrate leadership at the G8 Summit in L’Aquila Italy this week. Collectively, nations must work in partnership to ensure the global temperature rise does not exceed two degrees centigrade.

One of the fundamental principles of our faith is “*respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are part.*” We suggest that the challenges and consequences of failure in the face of today’s economic challenge, pale in comparison to failure on the global warming front in the longer term.

We respectfully call for Canada to re-establish our country as a global leader in environmental ‘stewardship’ in time for the G8 Summit next year in Canada, to address each of the five points detailed in the G8 Scorecard and above, to include a new bold target for 2020 and to support and signal leadership and commitment to place a price on carbon.

We look forward to your response to each of the five points. Thank you.

Sincerely,

(original signed by)

Jennifer Dickson
Executive Director

cc: The Honourable Michael Ignatieff, Leader of the Opposition, Leader of the Liberal Party
The Honourable Jack Layton, Leader of the New Democratic Party
The Honourable Gilles Duceppe, Leader of the Bloc Québécois

**LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER, MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENCE,
AND DEFENCE CRITIC FOR THE OFFICIAL OPPOSITION**

August 4, 2009

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A2

The Honourable Peter MacKay
Minister of National Defence
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

The Honourable Denis Coderre
Defence Critic for the Official Opposition
656-D Centre Block
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Re: Women as Peacekeepers

Greetings

On behalf of the Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC), we urge you to increase the number of women in the Canadian forces who serve as UN peacekeepers. We are motivated in this request by our First Principle, that of promoting the worth and dignity of every person, and by the recognition of Security Council Resolution 1325 (which reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts) in our Peace Resolutions.

We are pleased to know that the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) is promoting increasing the role of women as peacekeepers. UN Public Affairs Officer Ari Gaitanis noted at the DPI/NGO Briefing on 28 May 2009 that women's presence in peacekeeping operations brings different skill sets and qualities that are invaluable and unmatched to those of men.

In his message for International Peacekeepers Day 29th May, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon stated that the United Nations is pressing forward to involve more women as peacekeepers. "The imperative," he said, "is to draw on the unique and powerful contribution women can make. Female blue helmets, human rights monitors and other mission staff offer new skills and styles of functioning in the ever-evolving field of peacekeeping."

We urge you to increase the number of Canadian women in these roles, recognizing of course, the provisions of Security Council Resolution 1820 (2008) [http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/unsc_resolutions08.htm] which deals with women and peace and security.

Yours truly

(original signed by)

Kalvin Drake
President, Canadian Unitarian Council