



December 7, 2009

By e-mail: oda.b@parl.gc.ca

The Honourable Beverley J. Oda
Minister of International Cooperation
Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
200 Promenade du Portage
Gatineau, Quebec
K1A 0G4

Dear Minister Oda:

I am writing to you, on behalf of the Canadian Labour Congress, to express our grave concern about CIDA's unprecedented decision to decline, without adequate explanation, the 2009-2013 program proposal for KAIROS, a major faith-based human rights organization which has received funding from CIDA for the past 35 years.

I am aware that KAIROS staff worked closely with global partners and CIDA staff to develop the program proposal which focused on human rights and ecological sustainability, and which successfully went through various stages of the internal CIDA approval process.

If it is not reversed, the decision to discontinue support for KAIROS will have a devastating impact on 21 ecumenical and citizen's organizations in Latin America, Africa, Asia and the Middle East which work with marginalized communities, in countries where human rights violations and poverty are widespread. Furthermore, it will decimate KAIROS' educational work in Canada, work that supports citizens across the country to develop skills and knowledge on international development and social justice issues.

The Canadian Labour Congress is aware of and supports the leadership role played by KAIROS in raising awareness and addressing issues of social justice, economic and social marginality, and environmental sustainability in Canada and with its partners around the world. Indeed, the organization's support for human rights and poverty eradication embodies the very priorities which have been identified by CIDA in various official documents recently and on the agency's web site.

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The Canadian Labour Congress urges you to meet with KAIROS representatives without delay with a view to restoring the long-standing relations and constructive collaboration that CIDA has had with this organization over many years. I also urge you to reverse the decision to terminate support for KAIROS and to renew the organization's programme funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Georgetti', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kenneth V. Georgetti
President

cc: Ms. Margaret Biggs, President of CIDA
Ms. Mary Corkery, Executive Director, KAIROS Canada
CLC Officers and Executive Assistants
Members of the Labour International Development Committee