



*“When they call me, I will answer them.”*

# **KAIROS Strategic Plan**

**2010-2015**

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### Introduction

This KAIROS Strategic Plan represents the dreams, the hopes, the prayers and the work of many people in Canada and in countries around the world.

We have reached this point on our common journey in the midst of much uncertainty and upheaval. Staff and Members of KAIROS have felt this – the staff in an especially acute way. We owe the staff our deepest gratitude for their commitment.

We are conscious of history. We are mindful that our efforts, however modest, are intended to build a *new heaven and a new earth*. We know the costs of responsible citizenship. There are risks in naming what needs to be named. There are also profound theological risks in remaining silent. Yet, in all things, we are assured of God's protection:

*Those who love me, I will deliver;  
I will protect those who know my name.  
When they call me, I will answer them;  
I will be with them in trouble,  
I will rescue them and honour them.  
With long life, I will satisfy them,  
and show them my salvation.* (Psalm 91: 14-16)

In many ways, this Strategic Plan is a narrative of our common journey. There is a chapter about our partners around the world. On a daily basis, they face risks that few of us can imagine. There is a chapter about Indigenous peoples and the organizations that represent them. These are organizations that face many challenges but are vibrant and ready to offer a new and desperately needed vision of Canada. There is chapter about those who come to our communities from afar. Migrants leave behind their families, their friends, their communities to do vital work in Canada. There is a chapter about our planet and the creatures humans share this planet with. We are only too aware of the impact we have on this planet because of greed and indifference. And finally, woven throughout this narrative, are our dreams, our hopes and our shared commitment to this journey.

In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus asks his disciples: *With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it? It is like the mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.* (Mark 4: 30-32) No matter how dry and how hard the soil might be, we do not give up. May this document help guide us on our journey together.

Stephen Allen on behalf of the KAIROS Strategic Planning Committee  
Members: Stephen Allen, Henriette Thompson (Chair), Sue Wilson,  
Mary Corkery and John Mihevc

## Setting the context

At its December 10, 2008, meeting, the KAIROS Board reflected on “the KAIROS we want” – the core values of the ecumenical project that our Member churches and church-related organizations have created. Among the values named were these:

- that there be a deeper and more focused program;
- that KAIROS be faith-based in every way – its identity, its program, its commitments – keeping Members’ funding strong so that our faith-based voice is not overly influenced by grants, CIDA funds, etc.
- that KAIROS be more connected to the denominations at the local church level;
- that KAIROS retain its theological courage;
- that KAIROS be integrated with the social movements in the South.

In early 2009, in response to a serious financial crisis, KAIROS Members clarified and prioritized the work. This was a moment of renewed engagement by the Members who identified KAIROS as a key ecumenical body to whom they delegate common work for justice.

The Members also realized that greatly reduced funds meant KAIROS could not continue all areas of work that had been delegated to it in 2001. By March 2009, the Board made critical decisions based on the priorities of its Members. These led to significant programmatic changes as Members mandated KAIROS to focus the work on fewer issues, provide more integration between global and in-Canada work and implement more effective strategies for change.

## New program priorities

**Dignity and Rights** and **Sustainability** were approved by the Board as two major program areas that will involve research, education and action in the Canadian and global contexts. **Building the Ecumenical Justice Movement in Canada** was identified as a primary goal of KAIROS’ education and animation work.

### Dignity and Rights

- **Indigenous rights** is given high priority. KAIROS will provide leadership for ecumenical action based on the churches’ commitments to right relations with Indigenous peoples; recognition of inherent Indigenous rights; and the right to free, prior and informed consent to corporate activity that affects their communities.
- **Human rights research/analysis.** Human Rights is an important area of KAIROS expertise and will focus primarily on issues relating to countries of focus, e.g., Sudan, Colombia and the Philippines.

### Sustainability

- **Energy justice/climate change.** KAIROS will continue working to help Canadians reduce their carbon footprint. We focus on the environmental impacts of current, unsustainable energy policies while addressing important issues of equity in Canada and in the South.
- **Resource extraction.** Canada has one of largest mining industries in the world, with little accountability for the ecological and human rights impacts on local communities and Indigenous peoples. Canada needs policies that respect principles of ecological

sustainability and the human right to free, prior and informed consent of communities affected by resource extraction throughout the world.

- **Economic research/analysis/advocacy.** Economic justice is an important area of KAIROS' expertise and will focus primarily on issues of sustainability.

**Contribute to building the ecumenical justice movement in Canada.** The goal of our education/animation work is social change. Local and regional groups are vital to this work. Our primary constituency is our member churches and organizations. This means closer KAIROS collaboration **with all its Members** to more fully coordinate our efforts and strengthen our capacity to educate and mobilize together for change.

Education and campaigns will be an integral part of all programming, strengthening the link between **grassroots education and mobilizing** → **with policy development** → **and lobbying of key decision-makers.** KAIROS will increase the momentum of its advocacy by leading on fewer issues with more intensive follow-up and evaluation.

## Strategic Planning Committee

Given these program directions, the Strategic Planning Committee focused on the following set of outcomes:

- 1) Develop a set of **Organizational Directions** pertinent to the vitality and health of KAIROS as an organization carrying forward an ecumenical social justice mandate, and building on the 2006-2010 Strategic Directions.
- 2) Further the work on **Program Priorities.** The task of Strategic Planning will be to communicate these priorities in a meaningful way so as to encourage participation in further program planning. The Board of Directors passed Motion 2 on February 24, 2009, listing the Program Priorities – human rights (economy and ecology); Indigenous rights; ecological justice; education and grassroots advocacy; human rights (conflict and peace-building); and human rights in Canada (migrant justice; anti-poverty).
- 3) **Program Planning.** Within the established program priorities, strategic planning will consult on the key results sought by KAIROS at this juncture, understanding that the detailed planning on activities and outputs will be carried out by staff. The longer term planning around key impacts and outcomes remain the purview of the Circles of Ecumenical Collaboration and staff working together. The program plans will be shared with the KAIROS board annually.
- 4) **Ecumenical Tables.** Given the program work that has been prioritized, strategic planning will establish terms of reference for the “Circles of Ecumenical Collaboration” required to move this work forward over the next five years. Beyond the Board, what are the groups/committees required to carry out program? What tables are required, what is their role and when and how do they meet?

## Consultation process September-December 2009

A key step in moving toward the above goals was to organize an extensive consultation process in the fall of 2009. Input on four key questions was sought and received from KAIROS Staff,

seven KAIROS Program Committees, 18 local KAIROS groups, 11 partners from the Global South and three Canadian partner organizations. They responded to the following questions:

- 1) a) Given the overall direction of KAIROS, and present contextual realities, what are the two most important issues KAIROS should address in the major program area of **Sustainability** in the next five years?  
  
b) Given the overall direction of KAIROS, and present contextual realities, what are the two most important issues KAIROS should address in the major program area of **Dignity and Rights** in the next five years?
- 2) For each of the issues named in Question 1, what are the key results that are needed by 2015?
- 3) Using “Faithful Action for Justice” as a reference (especially page 2) what are the **three** most important strategic organizational directions for KAIROS for 2010-2015?
- 4) Given KAIROS’ newly-focused program areas and the priority on contributing to strengthening an **Ecumenical Justice Movement in Canada**, what would you recommend as key ecumenical tables of collaboration to replace the current Program Committee structure? How should these tables function?

The document “Synthesis of Responses to the KAIROS Consultation Strategic Planning 2010-2015” formed the basis of the Strategic Planning Committee’s further deliberations and recommendations to the KAIROS Board at its May 18-19, 2010, meeting. What follows sets out the three core elements of the KAIROS Strategic Plan 2010-2015:

- A. KAIROS Organizational Directions 2010-2015
- B. KAIROS Program Priorities 2010-2015
- C. Terms of Reference for Circles of Ecumenical Collaboration

## A. KAIROS Organizational Directions 2010-2015

**We will use the following strategies to enable us to achieve this vision for a more just world:**

- 1) focusing our work over a multi-year span, identifying achievable objectives in key areas, with an emphasis, where feasible, on collaboration across program areas;
- 2) strengthening ecumenical relationships to (i) coordinate and maximize our capacity for public education, animation, and advocacy; and (ii) respond to invitations from KAIROS member denominations to support their programs for congregational involvement in addressing issues of systemic change;
- 3) providing opportunities for church leaders and others in the KAIROS community to deepen their engagement in ecumenical justice work, including participation in delegations and in effective follow-up actions and advocacy;
- 4) strengthening networks across Canada with an emphasis on engaging young Canadians in the gospel imperative of working for a more just social order;
- 5) increasing KAIROS' capacity to use creative communication techniques and spiritual, artistic and liturgical expressions of justice work;
- 6) fostering opportunities to explore the meaning of diversity in the context of KAIROS as a Christian organization and of KAIROS' commitment to allowing the worldview of those on the margins to transform our work and ourselves; and
- 7) promoting a deeper understanding of the biblical and theological foundations of our work and increasing our ability to use this learning in public discourse.

The KAIROS 2010-2015 Organizational Priorities re-affirm the seven key strategies set out in the 2006-2010 KAIROS Organizational Directions "**Faithful Action for Justice.**"

Direction 7 is foundational and runs through all of KAIROS' work. Directions 1 and 5 are working well and should also continue.

From these seven strategies, KAIROS will give particular emphasis to the following in 2010-2015:

- Working with local and regional groups to strengthen our networks across Canada with an emphasis on engaging young Canadians in the gospel imperative of working for a more just social order;
- fostering opportunities to explore the meaning of diversity in the context of KAIROS as a Christian organization and of KAIROS' commitment to allowing the worldview of those on the margins to transform our work and ourselves;
- strengthening our ecumenical relationships with Canadian Council of Churches and Project Ploughshares, for example, (i) to coordinate and maximize our capacity for public education, animation, and advocacy; and (ii) to respond to invitations from KAIROS Members to support their programs for congregational involvement in addressing issues of systemic change and to provide opportunities for church leaders and others in the KAIROS community to deepen their engagement in ecumenical justice work (combining Directions 2 and 3).

## **What have we learned?**

KAIROS is unique. External facilitation/facilitators need to know KAIROS well and understand our articulated Christian theological framework for justice.

KAIROS (staff and Board) has strong capacity in strategic planning, implementation and evaluation of program.

The Strategic Plan is a living, changing plan, responding to the grace of the moment. We learned that Strategic Planning doesn't, and can't, control or anticipate everything. Responding to change in the moment generated new insights.

KAIROS is a community – of staff, Board, local network members. We care for each other through personal and professional loss and grief; we share resources.

We undertook to refocus program priorities and restructure KAIROS at the same time that many KAIROS members were undergoing similar changes.

Suggestion to future Strategic Planning Committees – be directed by Board-discerned Scripture passages and prayers as guideposts in our faith journey. We suggest that the next Strategic Plan include Scripture and prayers that provide a living record of our journey.

## **B. KAIROS Program Priorities**

### **Dignity and Rights**

#### **Indigenous and migrant rights in Canada**

Vast inequities in income, access, security and well-being continue to exist in Canada, with some groups continually denied basic human rights. KAIROS places a high priority on addressing the inequities experienced by Indigenous peoples whose social conditions shame Canada internationally and give witness to long standing injustice. Racism and poverty experienced by Indigenous women increases their vulnerabilities to violence and reduces the likelihood of prevention or justice for these women or their families. Rooted in a faithful commitment to human dignity and a covenantal challenge of right relationship, KAIROS partners with Indigenous communities so that, with their rights realized, conditions of life could dramatically improve. Working also with non-Indigenous Canadians, we invite understanding and participation as “treaty people” in a renewed nation to nation relationship.

Recognizing the increase in global migration caused by violence and exploitation, both economic and ecological, KAIROS also gives priority to the growing migrant community in Canada. Seeking God’s dream of well-being for all people, KAIROS strives to address the indignities linked to violations of the rights of migrant workers in Canada. We seek to partner with migrant social and labour organizations, as well as allied church communities, to increase justice for workers and improve their social and labour conditions.

By focusing our advocacy in Canada on the economic, social and cultural rights of Indigenous and migrant communities, KAIROS contributes to the goal of a Canada without poverty.

#### **Priority areas of work include:**

- a) in Indigenous rights
  - endorsement and implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
  - recognition of the right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent of Indigenous People as it relates to resource extraction and other forms of economic development (links also with resource extraction);
  - timely, transparent and just resolution of Outstanding Land Claims;
  - improving the safety of Indigenous women in Canada.
  
- b) in migrant rights
  - ratification and implementation by the federal government of the Convention on the Protection of Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families;
  - improving legislation (both federal and provincial) so that workers have improved access to permanent residency, social services, labour rights and family reunification.

## **International human rights and situations of conflict**

Tragedies of war and civil conflict continue to cause death, injury, displacement and hunger all across the globe. Violence against women and girls thrives in the midst of these crises, where rape is used as a weapon of humiliation and intimidation. Belief in God's promise of freedom from fear and a commitment to the sacredness of all life leads KAIROS to oppose human rights violations in the midst of conflict and to contribute to just peace. Historic commitments and expertise, partnership relationships and denominational priorities lead us to focus our attention on the conflicts in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Philippines and Indonesia, Mexico, Guatemala and Colombia, as well as Palestine and Israel.

Working with partners, we strive to end impunity, defend human rights advocates, expose gender-based violence and promote just and sustainable peace. Drawing on the lived experiences of our partners, KAIROS informs and engages Canadian citizens and parliamentarians in strategies to orient Canadian foreign policy towards human rights and peace building.

KAIROS is increasingly linking with "Women of Courage" who work for human rights and against gender-based violence in these diverse contexts, including Indigenous women's rights advocates in Canada.

In focused countries, KAIROS also works to address the impact of resource extraction on human rights (see Resource Extraction section).

### **Priority areas of work include:**

- strong and effective Canadian implementation of United Nations Security Resolution 1325 (and related resolutions) which require the protection of the rights of women and children in conflict and the active participation of women in peace building;
- addressing the human rights impact of Canadian trade in Mexico, Colombia, Guatemala and Palestine and Israel;
- increased prevention of, and an end to, impunity for extra-judicial killings of labour and human rights advocates in Indonesia, the Philippines and Colombia;
- monitoring the complete implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Process in Sudan and the Peace Agreement in Aceh, Indonesia;
- improving human rights governance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including the legal rights of women experiencing gender-based violence;
- promoting non-violent strategies to achieve just peace in Palestine and Israel.

# Sustainability

## Climate justice

The ecumenical community envisions a world which is secure and flourishing; where the well-being of humans and all other living creatures is cherished, supported and maintained in a harmonious balance; where peoples and livelihoods prosper and the health of the Earth Community is nurtured. Justice and equity must be at the heart of any sustainable economic, social or environmental system supporting Earth Community. Air, water, land and energy sources are part of the necessary environment to sustain life.

An ecological perspective understands the Earth itself as an integral part of God's wondrous Creation. Ecological justice is that which respects, seeks to preserve, and advocates for just relationships among all living things. It concerns the future of all life upon this planet, the condition of the natural world and our human impact or footprint upon it.

Climate change is one reflection of how our addiction to oil is having a devastating impact on the planet and people. Our dependence on fossil fuels also deepens human rights abuses, creates conflict and causes economic inequality.

### **Priority areas of work** include:

- working toward a national target to cut greenhouse gas emissions at least 25 per cent from 1990 levels by 2020;
- supporting a campaign calling for the implementation an effective national plan to reach this target and help developing countries to reduce their emissions and adapt to climate change;
- working for the adoption of a bold, strengthened second phase of the Kyoto Protocol;
- developing and supporting calls for a national plan that places a price on carbon and invests in conservation and renewable energy;
- conducting research and advocacy on financial reform including calls to implement a Financial Transactions Tax to curb speculation and enable governments to honour their promises to finance climate change adaptation in developing countries and to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

## Resource extraction

KAIROS is concerned about the growing negative impact of Canadian resource extraction companies' overseas activities on the environment and human rights, including the rights of Indigenous peoples. Extractive projects cause environmental degradation and have other impacts on the right to land and livelihoods in ways that have long-term and irreparable consequences. Canadian mining companies are operating worldwide and their presence is expanding, as is our government's support for their operations. KAIROS focuses on a small number of specific cases at the request of our partners and is part of a cross-Canada effort calling on the Canadian government to hold the extractive industry legally accountable for its actions overseas and here in Canada.

**Priority areas of work** include (links also with Free, Prior and Informed Consent in Indigenous Rights section):

- strengthening the regulatory regime of the Toronto Stock Exchange – reporting requirements and meeting human rights and environmental standards;
- supporting the campaign for legal reform in Canada to enable non-nationals to have legal standing to bring cases against Canadian companies in Canada;
- supporting campaigns for major manufacturers and investors to source non-conflict raw materials and end products;
- supporting calls for No Further Approvals for tar sands projects;
- supporting Indigenous communities' and environmental groups' long-standing calls for independent studies on the cumulative impacts of the tar sands development, especially on health, water and ecosystems;
- advocating with the federal government to develop a clean and sustainable energy strategy, based on conservation and the development of renewable energy as well as a funded transition plan for sustainable jobs in a renewable energy sector.