

KAIROS & the CIDA Cuts at a Glance

WHO IS KAIROS?

KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives is the social justice organization of eleven Canadian churches and religious organizations. KAIROS effects social change through research, education and advocacy, both in Canada and abroad. Its program work includes Ecological Justice, Economic Justice, Energy and Extraction, Human Rights, Just and Sustainable Livelihoods, and Indigenous Rights.

On July 1, 2001, KAIROS brought together the work of 10 national ecumenical coalitions whose work ranged geographically from the Americas (including Canada) to Asia, Africa and the Middle East; thematically from human rights to economic justice, ecology, and Aboriginal rights; and in practice from research to education and advocacy.

The KAIROS Board is made up of representatives from its Member churches and organizations:

- [Anglican Church of Canada](#)
- [Christian Reformed Church in North America](#)
- [Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada](#)
- [Presbyterian Church in Canada](#)
- [United Church of Canada](#)
- [Religious Society of Friends \(Quakers\)](#)
- [Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace](#)
- [Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops](#)
- [Canadian Religious Conference](#)
- [Mennonite Central Committee Canada](#)
- [Primate's World Relief and Development Fund](#)

KAIROS receives funds from its Member churches and organizations, from individual donations, grants or foundations, and from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

PROGRAM

KAIROS' current program is dedicated to social change in the areas of 'Sustainability' and 'Dignity and Rights'. KAIROS educates Canadians on social justice issues through a yearly public engagement campaign. From 2007 – 2010 the campaign 'Re-energize: Time for a Carbon Sabbath!' focused on the impact of fossil fuel addiction on human rights, ecological justice and economic equity.

"The word kairos comes from the Greek word for time. Contrasting with chronos, meaning ordinary or chronological time, kairos means holy or God-given time, time laden with meaning and choice. Kairos signals a time of crisis and new possibilities, a time of repentance, renewal and decisive action."

- From 'Becoming KAIROS: Taking Faithful Action for Justice in Your Community'

KAIROS' work is informed by its 21 partner organizations in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East ([click here to view a list of these organizations, with links to their websites](#)); some 70 grassroots groups and many more supporters across Canada; and by its collaboration with numerous civil society organizations working with common cause for a more just and sustainable world.

KAIROS, and its precursor organizations, have a 35-year history of successful co-operation and collaboration with CIDA in the areas of global partnership and public engagement.

THE CIDA CUTS

On November 30, 2009, the last day of an extension of its previous program funding, CIDA informed KAIROS that its 2009-2013 program proposal had been rejected. The proposal, developed with support from CIDA staff and in collaboration with KAIROS' Global Partners, advanced two CIDA priorities: promoting good governance (human rights) and advancing ecological sustainability (reducing the impact of climate change and addressing land degradation). It was approved at every level of CIDA before being rejected by the Minister for International Cooperation, Bev Oda. This decision, without warning, cut over \$7 million from KAIROS' budget, spread over the four-year duration of the proposal.

KAIROS supports partners in countries such as Sudan, the Congo, the Philippines, and Colombia who face extreme human rights and humanitarian crises as well as political repression. The decision will have a devastating impact on the work and well-being of these organizations, and the hundreds of marginalized communities who benefit from their programs.

A letter from the Minister Oda (sent four days *after* KAIROS received notice of the funding cut) claimed that KAIROS did not meet CIDA's new thematic priorities (Food Security, Children and Youth, and Economic Growth) and that CIDA only funds projects that deliver "results that make a real difference to the lives of those living in poverty." KAIROS' proposed work on good governance, ecological sustainability, and human rights clearly supports CIDA priorities. CIDA's own evaluator of KAIROS' 2006-2009 program wrote: "The KAIROS' program is very much in line with CIDA policies, particularly the United Nations (UN) Millennium Goals and with CIDA's Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) priorities, Key Agency Results (KARS) and Strengthening Aid Effectiveness policy."

Following the funding cuts, KAIROS received a flood of letters of support from all its member churches, its global partner organizations, numerous NGOs, the Liberal, Bloc Québécois, NDP

[CIDA Cuts
background material](#)

[The Faces and Impacts of
the CIDA Cut to KAIROS
Partnerships Program](#)

Briefing Notes
[CIDA Priorities and the
KAIROS Proposal](#)

[KAIROS Partners Address
the Three CIDA Priorities](#)

[Excerpts KAIROS' Successful
CIDA Evaluation
\(Feb 2009\)](#)

[Responses to points in
CIDA's form letter response](#)

[CIDA Funding to KAIROS
and the Canadian Churches](#)

and Green parties, and thousands of individuals in Canada and around the world.

"The Church in Southern Africa is deeply indebted to the churches in Canada for their prayers, ecumenical actions and solidarity in overcoming the scourge of apartheid. The initiatives of the Canadian churches through KAIROS have inspired continued faithful ecumenical action not only in Africa but around the world to uphold human rights. The world needs more of KAIROS Canada. It would be an unparalleled setback for the poor, vulnerable and disenfranchised if the voice and work of KAIROS in the global south is muted."

- Archbishop Desmond Tutu, December 9, 2009

JASON KENNEY'S ACCUSATION OF ANTI-SEMITISM

On December 16, 2009, Jason Kenney, Canada's Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, spoke at the 'Global Forum for Combating Anti-Semitism' in Jerusalem. As an example of its fight against anti-Semitism, he said his government had "defunded organizations ... like KAIROS for taking a leadership role in the boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign" against Israel.

Minister Kenney is misinformed about KAIROS and its long history of engagement with partners in Israel and Palestine.

For more than three decades, KAIROS' Member churches and organizations have supported the state of Israel and its right to exist in security. KAIROS has also supported the right of the Palestinian people to an independent, secure and viable state, within the framework of a just peace for Israel/Palestine.

In 2007, the KAIROS Board of Directors, who are the representatives of its 11 member churches and organizations, decided **against advocating for sanctions against Israel or a boycott of products from Israel**. The Board recognized that its member churches and organizations might choose to consider divestment from a Canadian corporation involved in Israel, the West Bank or Gaza that was "contributing directly or indirectly to violence, occupation or other human rights abuses in the region." In such a case, the Board recommended that divestment should be a "last resort" following several stages of corporate engagement involving dialogue with senior management and filing shareholder resolutions.

Minister Kenney's statement is divisive and alarming given its implication that the Canadian churches who are members of KAIROS are anti-Semitic. Criticism of Israel does not constitute anti-Semitism. Minister Kenney's politically charged statement suggests that Canadian

[Letters and Statements of support](#)

[Minister Kenney's speech at the Global Forum on Combating Anti-Semitism](#)

[KAIROS responds to Minister Kenney's comments on anti-Semitism](#)

[KAIROS Paper: Economic Advocacy Measures in Palestine and Israel](#)

development aid decisions are being made on the basis of political opportunism rather than due diligence, development criteria, and CIDA's own evaluation process.

GOING FORWARD

Despite many hundreds of letters to Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Minister for International Cooperation Bev Oda, as well as a great deal of media attention, KAIROS has yet to receive sufficient explanation for the sudden and unprecedented withdrawal of all of its CIDA funding, nor has it received an apology from Minister Jason Kenney for his erroneous statements in Jerusalem.

KAIROS continues to work with MPs across the country to bring a clearer understanding of the important collaboration between CIDA and KAIROS. This relationship has been to the benefit of literally hundreds of communities and thousands of people around the world. KAIROS is currently awaiting a response from Minister Oda to its request to meet and revisit the proposal and re-establish the relationship with CIDA.

TAKING ACTION

If you wish to support KAIROS in its efforts to restore CIDA funding, please write a letter to your Member of Parliament, with copies to the Prime Minister, Minister Bev Oda and the President of CIDA, Margaret Biggs:

The Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada: pm@pm.gc.ca, or harper.s@parl.gc.ca; phone 613 992 4211, fax 613 941 6900

The Hon. Bev Oda, Minister of International Cooperation: oda.b@parl.gc.ca; phone 613 992 2792, fax 613 992 2794

Margaret Biggs, President of CIDA: Margaret.Biggs@acdi-cida.gc.ca and info@acdi-cida.gc.ca; phone 819 997 7951, fax 819 953 6088

Contact information for [Members of Parliament](#) is available on the Government of Canada website. If you are able to **participate in a meeting** with your MP, contact Caroline Foster (<mailto:cfooster@kairoscanada.org>) to let her know your riding and your availability.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The [KAIROS website](#) has extensive background material, including briefing notes and media coverage, on the CIDA decision to cut funding to KAIROS and its overseas partners.



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