Building an Inclusive Movement
We are now three months away from the KAIROS Gathering planned for June 17-20, 2009 at the University of Waterloo. A diverse set of speakers includes Inuit leader Shelia Watt Cloutier, biblical theologian Ched Myers, Filipina ecumenical leader Sharon Ruiz Duremdes and many others. 40 plus workshops are planned, as well as other exciting activities.

Anti-poverty activists are invited to attend a pre-Gathering event planned for the day of June 17 (the Gathering begins after dinner). Young adults (18-30) will use the same day to hold their pre-event. On June 21, ecumenical migrant activists will meet with union and social partners in a Forum.

There is still time to register by going to http://www.kairosCanada.org/en/get-involved/gathering/. Some subsidies are available. Please contact Sheilagh McGlynn at smcglynn@kairosCanada.org or at 1-877-403-8933x246 for more information or to help with promotion.

Up Next!

Three Dynamic Events:
In Winnipeg...
A KAIROS Dignity and Rights workshop on Migrant Justice is scheduled for May 30 in Winnipeg at St. Ignatius Church. For more information, to attend, or to help us promote this workshop, contact Alfredo Barahona at abarahona@kairosCanada.org or 1-877-403-8933x251.

In Toronto...
A KAIROS Carbon Sabbath Initiative workshop is scheduled for May 9 in Toronto at Trinity Presbyterian Church York Mills. To register, contact Gail Turner at g_turner@rogers.com or by phone at 416-531-8677.

In Edmonton...
A Dialogue Evening on the Tar Sands with the Church Leaders, Southern and Indigenous partners who are participating in the KAIROS delegation. May 21, 7 p.m. at King’s University College in Edmonton. For more information, contact Rosanne Thede at rthede@shaw.ca.

Ending Poverty

On the eve of the federal budget, KAIROS released a letter to Canada’s First Ministers on the economic crisis. The letter laid out a set of moral principles and called on the leaders to take decisive action toward the creation of a just and sustainable international financial order.
**Dignity and Rights**

Using as a guide the KAIROS training design on the rights of Indigenous peoples, KAIROS has developed comparable materials on the rights of migrants and those on low incomes. The migrant training design will be used in a workshop scheduled for May 30 in Winnipeg. This is one in series of workshops held as part of KAIROS’ *Equal in Dignity: Cross Canada Human Rights Training* project.

KAIROS has been working in partnership with other organizations in shaping the “Dignity for All” campaign. The vision of the campaign is to make a poverty-free and more socially secure Canada. The conviction of the campaign is the need to respect and defend the right of every person to dignity and security. The campaign will be launched in Calgary at the Canadian Social Forum, May 19-23.

**Migrant Justice**

KAIROS participated in a community consultation with MP Olivia Chow (a member of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration) to provide input and policy recommendations for Canada’s Temporary Foreign Workers Program. KAIROS’ recommendations included the creation of a path from temporary to permanent residency for all such workers and the enforcement of workers rights based on provincial and national labour standards.

**Borderless**, our DVD on undocumented workers, continues to be shown in Canada and as far afield as the Trinidad and Tobago Film Festival. In March, KAIROS signed an agreement with George Brown College to have *Borderless* captioned for people with hearing disabilities. Reports from our distributors in Canada indicate that 29 universities, libraries and other educational institutions have purchased *Borderless*.

**Indigenous Rights**

In February, KAIROS co-authored a letter to the Prime Minister with Amnesty *International* and the Native Women’s Association of Canada urging the government to meet with Indigenous women’s groups and their supporters to develop a national action plan to end violence against Indigenous women.

Also in February, the UN Human Rights Council made recommendations to Canada, on Indigenous rights based in part on issues raised by KAIROS in our September submission and in subsequent joint submissions related to the U.N. *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (DRIP). Following the release of the UN’s recommendations, KAIROS issued a joint public statement emphasizing the international community’s “strong message” to uphold the rights of Indigenous peoples. In March, the Ad Hoc Coalition on the DRIP (which includes KAIROS), sent a joint letter to the Prime Minister urging collaboration with civil society to address human rights concerns.

**Promoting Energy Justice**

KAIROS has continued to advocate for the redirection of fossil fuel subsidies to sustainable renewable energy, and for progressive Canadian climate change policies. Among the major moments were the federal budget and the upcoming major UN climate change conference in Copenhagen.

The latest government subsidies to the oil industry in Canada, announced in the 2009 budget, are taking the form of federal funding for the proposed Mackenzie Valley Pipeline and for developing technology to bury carbon dioxide underground (also known as Carbon Capture and Sequestration or CCS). KAIROS is opposing both of these subsidies and encouraging the government to instead renew funding to the *ecoEnergy Renewable Power* program which promotes wind and other renewable power.
KAIROS networks across the country continue to promote our action cards on the subsidies issue. The activists in the KAIROS network are also using new dynamic public advertisements in their communities to raise the central issues in the Re-energize campaign. While information is still coming in, KAIROS anticipates that over a hundred faith communities used our Earth Hour educational resources to hold events on March 28, 2009.

KAIROS has joined with several other organizations in Canada to press all politicians into signing the Kyoto Plus pledge, which affirms the need for Canada to commit to at least a 25% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (from 1990 levels) by 2020 as a position to take forward to the December Climate Change talks in Copenhagen. Participation in this cross-sectoral campaign will be an aspect of next year’s KAIROS Re-energize program.

KAIROS has also provided strong support for our partners in the South to have their perspectives and proposals heard on the global stage. We supported the participation of a number of partners in global climate change meetings in Poland. Out of this has emerged a stronger global South network, “Climate Justice Now”, that is connecting issues of equity and human rights with climate change. We have also pressed our government to support an innovative proposal from Ecuadorian partner Acción Ecológica to keep Ecuador’s oil in the ground. A new KAIROS resource – a map which graphically illustrates the links between Canadian oil consumption and conflict around the globe – will be available in April.

Our Church Leaders Delegation to the Alberta Tar Sands is set to go for May 21. Logistical arrangements are complete, communications plans are in place, and we look forward to a successful trip that will deepen our ecumenical commitment to energy justice and increase our understanding of the ethical issues at stake in the Tar Sands.

Defending Human Rights and Just Trade and Promoting Corporate Accountability

Human Rights and Trade
In February, KAIROS co-sponsored a tour of four leaders of Colombian social movements representing women, Indigenous peoples, workers and faith-based communities. They came to Canada to share their concerns about the impending Canada-Colombia Free Trade Deal.
The delegation met with a wide variety of politicians, including Minister for Latin America Peter Kent and Minister for International Trade Stockwell Day, as well as the media. They explained that the human rights crisis is ongoing, widespread and systematic. The representatives urged all MPs to vote against the trade deal until human rights are upheld and respected in Colombia. They called on the Canadian government to undertake a thorough, independent Human Rights Impact Assessment. In the meetings, the Ministers provided assurances that human rights concerns would be taken into account.

The partners also made connections with Canadian activists and social sectors in Toronto, Montreal, Halifax, Fredericton, Hamilton and Vancouver where they found overwhelming support for their concerns.

Unfortunately, the Canadian government has chosen to ignore the partners’ calls. On March 26, it introduced implementing legislation in the House. In a KAIROS press release, issued the same day, we expressed our outrage that the government had introduced legislation for a free trade deal with Colombia ignoring the pleas of Canadian and Colombian activists. The implementing legislation must pass through the House so the deal could still be voted down. KAIROS is coordinating efforts with a coalition of other groups to pressure MPs not to support the current deal unless an independent human right impact assessment is undertaken.

Roundtable Report on Extractives
On March 26, after almost two years of silence, the federal government responded to the National Roundtables on Corporate Social Responsibility, in which KAIROS, members and Southern partners participated in 2006. The disappointing government response, delivered by International Trade Minister Stockwell Day, fails to include any mandatory standards for Canadian extractive companies operating abroad or any remedies for affected communities. Mike Karikpo of Oilwatch Africa provided this response:

This is indeed very sad! The disappearance of regulations in the financial sector plunged the entire global economy down the slippery slopes of recession and has put many families in dire straits. This failure by the Canadian government to insist on legally binding obligations on international best practices for corporations operating in the global south, on environmental protection and human rights, or an independent ombudsman to investigate reports of abuse is toeing the same line and the repercussions which are already evident, would be greater than the financial melt down. But even under these circumstances, we must see hope and work continuously to achieve the change we desire.

KAIROS and other members of the Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability (CNCA) will be preparing a detailed critique of the response and convening a multi-stakeholder conference in Ottawa in early June to explore needed corporate accountability reforms.

Eleven Canadian churches and church related organizations working together for justice and peace.

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Colombian partner Father Omar meets with Halifax MP Megan Leslie.