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25 May 2021

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Minister Marco Mendicino, and Minister Bill Blair
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

RE: Regularization Program for Non-Status Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs)

Dear Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Minister Marco Mendicino, and Minister Bill Blair:

KAIROS applauds the Government of Canada for recently opening permanent residency applications to 50,000 temporary foreign workers (TFWs) with status in health care and other essential sectors. KAIROS, however, recognizing the urgent need to broaden the scope of this opportunity to include non-status TFWs, appeals to the government to re-establish a regularization program.

Referring to documented workers, Minister Mendicino wrote: "Your status may be temporary, but your contributions are lasting—and we want you to stay."

We implore the Canadian government to actively support non-status temporary foreign workers. Thousands of undocumented workers who left abusive employers or were laid off due to the pandemic are in limbo; workers like Nadira Tanveer and Carlo Escario who have spent years in Canada as invaluable live-in caregivers face deportation because they lost their status.

This situation is deeply stressful for them and other non-status TFWs who are crucial to Canada's health care and food sectors, and who have contributed to the Canadian community and economy for years.

Canada has a history of administering successful regularization programs, beginning in 1960. The Adjustment of Status Program in 1973 was the largest of its kind in Canadian history, addressing the large number of non-status people in the country at the time. It regularized approximately 39,000 people from more than 150 countries.

Canada currently faces a similar situation. We ask that the government immediately halt all deportations of TFWs, including Ms. Tanveer and Mr. Escario, and introduce a special pathway to regularize their status towards permanent residency.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the essential nature of the work of TFWs in Canada as well as their vulnerability. In addition to regularizing non-status TFWs, we call on the Government of Canada to end temporary migration and return to permanent residency as the strategy to strengthen the country, including meeting labour market demands.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'A Francis', with a stylized, cursive script.

Aisha Francis
Executive Director

Cc Connie Sorio, Migrant Justice Program Coordinator, KAIROS Canada
 Jasraj Singh Hallan, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Critic
 Jenny Kwan, Multiculturalism, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Critic
 Senator Ratna Omidvar