



Canadian Ecumenical
Justice Initiatives /
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Members

The Anglican Church of Canada
Canadian Catholic Organization for
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Canadian Religious Conference
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in Canada
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The Primate's World Relief and
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Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
The United Church of Canada

Membres

Assemblée annuelle canadienne
de la Société religieuse des Amis
Comité Central Mennonite Canada
Conférence religieuse canadienne
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L'Église anglicane du Canada
Église Évangélique Luthérienne
au Canada
L'Église presbytérienne au Canada
L'Église réformée chrétienne en
Amérique du Nord
(Société canadienne)
L'Église Unie du Canada
Le fonds du Primat pour le secours
et le développement mondial

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December 15, 2022

Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A2

Cabinet Committee on Economy, Inclusion and Climate "B"

The Hon. François-Philippe Champagne
The Hon. Ahmed D. Hussen
The Hon. Carolyn Bennett
The Hon. Randy Boissonnault
The Hon. Sean Fraser
The Hon. Steven Guilbeault
The Hon. Mark Holland
The Hon. Gudie Hutchings
The Hon. Dominic LeBlanc
The Hon. Diane LeBouthillier
The Hon. Marc Miller
The Hon. Joyce Murray
The Hon. Mary F.Y. Ng
The Hon. Pascale St-Onge

Dear Prime Minister and Members of Cabinet Committee on Economy, Inclusion and Climate "B":

Rarely does an opportunity present itself that will both be historic, and pragmatic. You have that opportunity right now. In the weeks to come, the Cabinet Committee on Economy, Inclusion and Climate "B" will receive a proposal to make life-altering public policy for over half a million people who have no other possibility of receiving access to universal rights.

You will be asked to weigh in on regularization for undocumented people, and we urge you to put all your support behind a program that is uncapped; includes all undocumented people and their families; and is a one-step program where all undocumented people can apply for permanent residency.

KAIROS Canada, its 10 member churches and religious organizations, and network have advocated for the rights of temporary foreign workers, including status for all, for decades.

Recently, from December 2020 to September 2022, KAIROS and its partners supported migrant workers through the Empowering Temporary Foreign Workers During COVID-19 project, funded by the Government of Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) Program. And in September, four of KAIROS' member churches, which are involved in the global movement of Churches Witnessing with Migrants, [wrote to the Canadian government](#) in support of permanent residency for migrant workers and the regularization of undocumented migrants.

Over the years, we have accompanied migrant workers, particularly those who leave abusive employers or are left in limbo due to program changes. We have witnessed firsthand their distress. No person should be this vulnerable; and certainly not in Canada which has a reputation for championing the rights of all.

We are writing to you today to support a comprehensive and inclusive regularization program which ensures:

- All 500,000 undocumented people in Canada and their families (without exclusions of any kind) are given permanent residency;
- All undocumented people are able to apply for permanent residency, and can be issued work and study authorizations as they await processing of their permanent residency applications;
- An immediate stop to detentions and deportations so that migrants are not deported before they can apply;
- Provision of free and accessible applications; and



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- Ongoing regularization so that those who become undocumented in the future can get permanent residency status. The entire immigration system must be overhauled to ensure permanent resident status for all migrants so that no one ever becomes undocumented in the future.

We support the proposal developed by Migrant Rights Network: www.migrantrights.ca/resources/regularization-in-canada.

There is unanimous support for this approach to regularization. Almost every major civil society, labour, health and environmental organization has joined the call for full and permanent immigration status for all - nearly 500 organizations. [Major organizations from across Canada have also written letters](#) to Prime Minister Trudeau supporting this regularization proposal.

Permanent resident status is the mechanism through which all other rights are accessed. By supporting a comprehensive regularization program, you would:

- **Address a historic wrong:** A comprehensive program would ensure that you are remembered for supporting life-altering public policy, which corrects a historic wrong. A fair society with equal rights is only possible if everyone has the same immigration status.
- **Be part of ending systemic racism and ensuring gender equality:** Undocumented people are mostly racialized, low-waged people, and often women. Ensuring rights and access for them is part of implementing anti-racist policy and gender equality.
- **Ensure improved labour conditions:** Employers of undocumented workers threaten them with deportations to stop them from asserting their rights. This abuse results in overall worsening of working conditions in the labour market, and rewards bad employers.
- **Ensure public health:** Undocumented migrants often do not access healthcare until it is absolutely necessary due to the cost. By the time they do, their health conditions are much more complicated, and the burden on the healthcare system is much heavier.
- **Create more effective social policy:** Currently, there are no reliable statistics on undocumented people in Canada. An inclusive regularization program will ensure that non-status people enter into everyday life, allowing for more informed and effective social policy to be created.
- **Grow the economy at greater rates than cost of processing or settlement services:** Most non-status people pay taxes but their employers, many of whom are very profitable businesses, do not pay statutory remittances. Regularizing 500,000 undocumented people will increase employer CPP and EI contributions by at least \$1.1 billion, just in the first year. As undocumented people achieve stability through permanent residence, they will lay down roots, purchase assets of greater value, and spend more on Main Street.
- **Create labour mobility to address shortages where they exist:** Undocumented people live and work here. Many are in cash-based jobs, or are under or unemployed. Regularizing all undocumented migrants will increase their labour mobility, unlocking their skills and experience, enabling them to move and take on jobs of their choice or skill level.
- **Build on best practices around the world:** Between 1996 and 2008, 24 of the 27 EU Member States implemented regularization programs, and some several times. An estimated 5.5 to 6 million people were regularized in that time. The largest programs were the Italian 2002 program that regularized 634,000 people and the Spanish 2005 program that regularized 578,375 people. This **year (2022)**, Ireland regularized almost all undocumented people in the country who met a basic residency requirement.

Thank you in advance for your support and consideration.

Sincerely,

Aisha Francis
Executive Director, KAIROS Canada