



**EASTERN SYNOD**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada**

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December 9, 2009

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper  
Prime Minister of Canada  
Office of the Prime Minister  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0N2

Dear Prime Minister Harper:

**Re: Cancellation of CIDA funding to KAIROS**

I am writing to request that you, Prime Minister, together with Minister of International Cooperation, Bev Oda, and Margaret Biggs, President of Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) reverse the decision announced by CIDA via a phone call informing KAIROS that their 2009-2013 proposal for international development and public engagement on human rights and ecological sustainability would not be funded.

Might I point out that if this decision is not reversed, funds to 21 ecumenical and citizen's organizations in Latin America, Africa, Asia and the Middle East will all be cut together with cuts to educational work that helps many Canadians develop skills and knowledge in the exercise of their global citizenship.

This decision was completely unexpected. KAIROS and its precursor organizations have been funded by CIDA since 1973. This represents over 35 years of positive collaboration between churches ecumenically represented through KAIROS and CIDA.

This decision was unexpected because the KAIROS 2006-2009 proposal received a positive audit report and an excellent evaluation. The CIDA evaluator described "positive and measureable progress toward the achievement of the results at the output, outcome and impact levels." I am told that the evaluator commented that "experience and good judgment is one of the important reasons for their success in achieving results..."

If it is not reversed, this decision will have a devastating impact on the work and well-being of our partners overseas, the hundreds of marginalized communities and thousands of the people who have benefited from their programs <sup>A</sup>. Furthermore, it will decimate our joint ecumenical education program in Canada (provided for the churches through KAIROS), which enhances the commitment of Canadians to international cooperation.

Finally, the KAIROS human rights focus is completely consistent with the ODA Accountability Act which came into affect in June of 2008. The act requires all Official Development Assistance “to be consistent with international human rights standards.”

In closing, I wish to thank you for the opportunity to write to you regarding this important matter. I also wish to express my appreciation for your consideration of the same. The Eastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada stretches from Sault Ste Marie, ON to Halifax, NS and represents approximately 20,000 households.

With all of God’s blessings,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, starting with a plus sign followed by the name "Michael" in a cursive script.

Bishop Michael Pryse, Eastern Synod of the  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada  
MJP/cd

cc. The Honourable Bev Oda, Minister of International Cooperation  
Margaret Biggs, President of CIDA  
Michael Ignatieff, Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada  
Gilles Duceppe, Leader of the Bloc Québécois  
Honourable Jack Layton, Leader of the NDP  
Mary Corkery, Executive Director, KAIROS, Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives  
The Rev. Susan Johnson, National Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada  
Archbishop Fred Hiltz, Primate, The Anglican Church of Canada

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<sup>A</sup> **KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives** supports partners in countries such as Sudan, the Congo, the Philippines, Indonesia and Colombia. KAIROS supports, funds and assists partners who face extreme human rights and humanitarian crises as well as political repression. KAIROS seeks to fund a women’s legal clinic to address rampant gender-based violence. In Sudan, KAIROS is working with Sudan Council of Churches (SCC) and its members to mobilize greater action for democratic peace. In Indonesia, KAIROS, through CIDA, supports KONTRAS, The Commission for Disappearances and Victims of Violence. In Colombia, KAIROS supports a grassroots women’s human rights organization, Organizacion Femenina Popular (OFP). This is a sampling of KAIROS’ international involvement.