

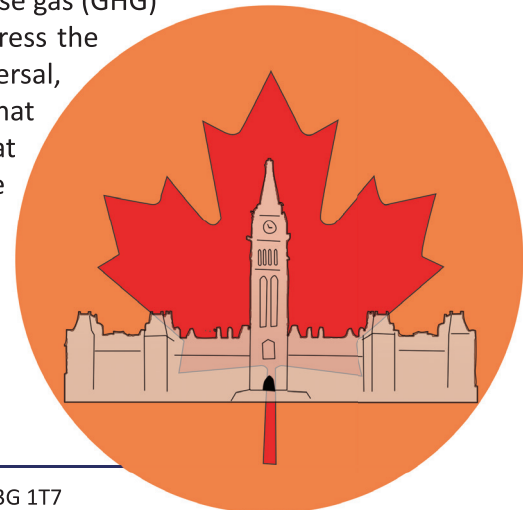
# ELECTORAL GUIDE 2015

## Introduction

As Canadians prepare to vote in the upcoming federal election to be held on October 19, 2015, Development and Peace, a social movement made up of thousands of members across Canada that supports communities in the Global South seeking justice and to improve their living conditions, is compelled to fulfill its role in representing the voices of those in the Global South affected by Canadian policies. Canada, a member of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the G7 (Germany, Canada, United States, France, Italy, Japan and the United Kingdom), affects the everyday life of communities in the Global South through its policies and its participation in these organizations. We would like to draw the attention of federal candidates to some of the issues that concern our organization and those we work hand in hand with, and which we hope will be addressed by the new government.

Autumn 2015 promises to be a busy time on the international stage. In September, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are slated to replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), will be adopted, and in December, the 21<sup>st</sup> United Nations Conference on Climate Change (COP21) will be held in Paris. In addition to these international events, the publication in June 2015 of Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si'* (Be Praised) on integral ecology brought global attention to the climate change crisis. The pope's message on the need to act now joins that of scientists and environmentalists. Indeed, Pope Francis echoes many others in saying that "we need only take a frank look at the facts to see that our common home is falling into serious disrepair." (61) Now is the time, according to our Holy Father, for honest and open dialogue with a variety of actors on how to live together, on Earth, our common home, in a fair and sustainable way. (63)

The SDGs are more than a new version of the Millennium Development Goals. In fact, for the first time, issues related to the environment and development are being addressed together. In addition, there is a great deal of pressure for the SDGs to be universal, *i.e.* applicable to the peoples of all countries, not just those of the Global South. Working simultaneously on objectives related to poverty and the environment from a universal perspective is necessary in our current context, where issues of poverty, pandemics and climate change transcend borders. In addition, during COP21, world leaders will need to work from a global perspective so that a new binding international agreement is signed, making it possible to limit greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and provide the Global South with the necessary resources to address the impacts of climate change. To ensure that the SDGs are adopted and that a universal, binding and ambitious agreement on climate change is ratified, it is crucial that Canadians, like yourself, engage with political leaders to let them know that these issues matter to you. The federal election to be held this fall is a unique opportunity to share your concerns with the candidates and influence decision-making on issues that affect both development and international social justice.



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## For whom is the guide intended and how can it be used?

This guide is intended for all members and supporters of Development and Peace who wish to play an active role in the election campaign and ensure that the voices of communities in the Global South are heard as they fight for fairer development. The guide suggests questions that may be asked during meetings held with candidates (ex. during town hall meetings and/or debates, or when candidates going door-to-door arrive at your home).

However, feel free to ask questions on other topics that are important to you.

## Issues

This election guide presents two current issues which are a priority for Development and Peace: ecological justice and international aid. Resources on related issues from our past campaigns can be found at the end of the guide. We encourage you to participate actively in Canada's democratic life by meeting with candidates and asking them questions on the issues presented in this guide, and/ or on other topics that are important to you.

**Climate change** is a global problem that requires an international solution. We must act both on the causes, *i.e.* greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and also on the impacts of these changes. Current international targets are insufficient for significant progress to be made in reducing GHG emissions. National targets must be adopted. While the populations of the Global South are most affected by the impacts of climate change, they contribute to it the least. So while Canada must adopt ambitious GHG reduction targets and change its energy and economic model, we must also provide the nations of the Global South with financial and technical support that will enable them to adapt to climate change.

In Canada, in recent years, there have been significant changes to how funds for **official development assistance (ODA)** are used that have not always been favourable for communities in the Global South, for whom this assistance is intended. However, Canada's Official Development Assistance Accountability Act and the SDGs offer principles on which we can base our ODA. The elections are an opportunity to remind political parties and candidates of Canada's commitments in terms of ODA and our responsibility to help build a more just, equitable and peaceful world that is based on solidarity.



# Ecological Justice

## An international agreement on climate change

Canada's backpedaling and isolation on the international stage regarding environmental issues is alarming. Canada's withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol illustrates the change in direction of our government on environmental and climate issues. Canada, one of the most significant GHG emitters per capita, is also among the countries with the least ambitious national GHG emission targets. At this point, however, environmentalists and scientists agree that a drastic change of course is needed to limit the effects of climate change. Following the current trend, global warming could reach between 4 and 6°C, which will have very dangerous consequences for us all. Furthermore, in his encyclical, Pope Francis affirms the necessity of a global consensus to tackle the underlying causes of climate change: our production and consumption patterns "cannot be resolved by unilateral actions on the part of individual countries." (164)

The 21<sup>st</sup> United Nations Conference on Climate Change (COP21), to be held in Paris in December 2015, is an opportunity for Canada to change its policy and reclaim its place as an international leader on environmental issues.

Taking action on climate change means acting on both the causes – GHG emissions –and the consequences of climate change. The impacts of climatic disruptions are already being felt, and people in the Global South are those most affected. During the Conference of the Parties in Lima in December 2014, Canada pledged \$300 million to the Green Climate Fund to support countries of the Global South in the fight against climate change. Canada is also planning on contributing to the joint objective of the Conference of the Parties to mobilize, \$100 billion USD per year from public and private sources by 2020 in order to finance the fight against climate change.

The Green Climate Fund is a financial mechanism of the United Nations, connected with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).<sup>1</sup> It aims to transfer funds from the most developed countries to the most vulnerable for projects designed to mitigate the effects of climate change. Officially launched in 2011 during COP17 in Durban South Africa, capital in the Green Climate Fund exceeded \$10 billion USD by the time COP20 took place in Lima, Peru in December 2014.

## Questions for the candidates:

- In a context where the urgency to act is no longer a topic of debate, what is your and your party's plan for Canada to participate actively and in good faith in the development of a new universal agreement on climate change that is fair, ambitious and legally-binding, and will ensure that the temperature does not warm more than 2°C?
- How do you and your party plan to make the necessary resources available to the most vulnerable populations so that they can adapt to climate change? Will these resources be allocated in addition to ODA and will they be distributed as loans or subsidies?

<sup>1</sup> The UNFCCC was adopted during the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro and came into force on March 21, 1994. The UNFCCC is the first attempt, within the UN framework, to better identify what climate change really is and how to address it. COP21 will bring together all of the convention's Signatory States, including Canada.

# Energy

Our energy and economic dependence on fossil fuels is the main reason why our government refuses to significantly limit our GHG emissions. In fact, independent Canadian studies show that Canada's GHG emissions increased by 18% between 1990 and 2012, and that 73% of that increase is attributable to the development of the tar sands.

According to the *Fifth Assessment Report* by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), two-thirds of currently identified fossil fuel energy reserves must remain underground, as their exploitation will result in a rise in temperature that will have devastating consequences for the economy, as well as for humanity and the environment.

In Canada, while the exploitation of fossil fuels (oil, coal and gas) contributes to national energy consumption, oil from the tar sands is mainly earmarked for the international market. The development of the Canadian economy therefore becomes closely linked to the exploitation of natural resources, primarily oil from the tar sands.

During the G7 meeting held in Munich, Germany, on June 7- 8, 2015, the leaders of member countries pledged to significantly reduce GHG emissions by 2050, with a possible cessation of the use of fossil fuels by 2100.

Such a retreat from the use of fossil fuels requires a profound review of how we produce and consume energy, as well as a shift from our current economic model which is focused solely on growth.

## Questions for the candidates:

- According to you and your party, what should Canada's new energy and economic model be? What role will energy efficiency and renewable energy play?
- What do you and your party intend to do so that Canada can free itself from its economic and energy dependency on fossil fuels? Do you plan to put a price on carbon and discontinue any government support for coal mining and oil and gas production?

# Agriculture and food security

Issues concerning agriculture, food security, the current model for economic development and climate change are interrelated. It is therefore essential to address them together.

Industrial agriculture and food production play a large role in climate change. Current food systems are responsible for almost half of GHG emissions and absorb 70% of the global supply of fresh water. The failure of these agricultural systems is flagrant yet we rarely call them into question in debates on climate change and food security.

Small farmers feed 70% of the world's population. However, when it comes to investment in agriculture, they only receive a tiny fraction. The agricultural sector is generally neglected, and the majority of investment is funnelled into industrial methods of agricultural production. Agro-ecological practices can help farmers improve their yields and increase food security and incomes. These practices also help reduce the risk of crop failure and livestock loss due to climate change and have less of an impact on the climate itself.

Small-scale and environmentally-responsible agriculture can significantly reduce GHG emissions. By following the principles of food sovereignty, agriculture can be seen as more positive and attractive, as the work of producers is given greater value and social ties between producers and consumers are strengthened. We must focus on the nurturing and environmental dimensions of agriculture and not only on its commercial aspects if we want to help mitigate climate change.



## Questions for the candidates:

- According to you and your party, what role should small-scale farming play in the Canadian agricultural model?
- What resources (financial, humans, technical) do you and your party intend to make available to small-scale farmers in the Global South?

## For further information

Here are additional resources for those who want further information on the topic of ecological justice and the election campaign.

Climate Action Network:  
[climateactionnetwork.ca](http://climateactionnetwork.ca)

The Council of Canadians: [canadians.org](http://canadians.org)

Catholic International Cooperation for  
Development and Solidarity (CIDSE):  
[cidse.org](http://cidse.org)

Food Secure Canada: [foodsecurecanada.org/EatThinkVote](http://foodsecurecanada.org/EatThinkVote)



# International Aid

## Level of aid

As one of the richest countries in the world, Canada has contributed to international aid efforts since the 1960s. Over the years, Canada has participated in a number of major summits and signed numerous international treaties aimed at eliminating poverty, including those adopted by the United Nations. In 1969, the Canadian Prime Minister, Lester B. Pearson, led the work of a United Nations Commission which recommended that donor countries contribute 0.7% of their gross national income (GNI) to international aid. This benchmark is still recommended by the UN to donor countries. Canada, however, has never managed to reach this target. Instead, its contribution has declined substantially in recent years. In 2014, according to OECD figures, Canada allocated only 0.24% of its GNI to international aid. This means that Canada ranks 13<sup>th</sup> among the 23 donor countries, whereas it stood 6<sup>th</sup> in 1995.

In the wake of the 2015 Conference on Financing for Development, held in July in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia<sup>2</sup>, and as the international community negotiates for the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)<sup>3</sup>, Canada has a unique opportunity to do more to combat poverty, including being a leader in advancing the principles underlying these objectives and increasing its level of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to help reach them.

## Question for the candidates:

- Are you and your party ready to commit to increasing the share of Canada's gross national income allocated to official development assistance? And if so, what is the percentage targeted and how do you plan on achieving this?

## The voice of people of the Global South

Development and Peace works with and for people living in poverty. Our approach is based on the creation of partnerships with grassroots organizations and coalitions in countries in the Global South that are seeking sustainable and permanent change. It also gives priority to the experiences and perspectives of those living in situations of poverty and exclusion.

In the past, the Government of Canada, through its international development aid program, encouraged countries of the Global South to set their own priorities, taking the needs of their populations into account. However, in 2010, the government introduced new funding mechanisms, where international development agencies and other civil society actors must now submit proposals in response to tenders by the government. These new mechanisms do not take into account the needs of the poorest people, given that the objectives and priorities of projects are in line with Canada's interests rather than those of the people for whom the aid is intended.

Moreover, these guidelines do not meet the requirements of Canada's Official Development Assistance Accountability Act, aimed at contributing to poverty reduction by taking into account the perspectives of poor people, and being compatible with international standards in terms of human rights protection.

<sup>2</sup> The Financing for Development Conference, held from July 13 to 16, 2015, aimed to define the role of partnerships and global funds, as well as the funding guidelines of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

<sup>3</sup> The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a series of goals that will follow-up on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which expire in 2015, and that will aim to free the planet from poverty and hunger.

## Questions for the candidates:

- What importance do you intend on giving to the concerns of the most poor and vulnerable populations of the Global South in policymaking and aid programs?
- How do you and your party intend to integrate the needs and perspectives of communities of the Global South in projects supported by official development assistance?

## Promoting Canada's economic interests

During recent years, Canada's approach to international aid has changed so as to place Canada's commercial, political and military interests above those of people affected by poverty and injustice.

This approach experienced a major turning point in 2013 with the adoption of the concept of "economic diplomacy," which was presented in the government's Federal Global Markets Action Plan. Under this new "diplomacy," the interests of Canada's private sector are considered a priority, in terms of both development and international relations.

By making the promotion of Canada's commercial interests a key objective of its foreign policy, the government took another step towards significantly altering Canada's approach to international development, which had already begun to shift with the merger of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), and the inclusion of extractive companies in receiving public funding for corporate social responsibility (CSR) projects.

However, the experience and lessons from decades of research on approaches to international development show that such a focus is not an effective way to eliminate poverty and may greatly undermine the efforts of the poorest people. Direct foreign investment does not necessarily improve the living conditions of the majority of people, and in many cases, the activities of international companies actually have the opposite affect and undermine local governance bodies. In fact, the private sector does not aim to reduce poverty and rarely contributes to the kind of growth and economic diversification that creates jobs and helps communities sustainably improve their living conditions.

Furthermore, countries that are particularly dependent on resource extraction cannot solely count on the short-term CSR projects of companies that target specific "beneficiary populations." They need development strategies that use the revenue from resource extraction to diversify their economies so as to meet the needs of their people and build their future.

Many Canadian NGOs as well as other segments of the population have expressed their concerns, and sometimes their opposition, to this approach of placing Canada's commercial interests above those of the most vulnerable people.

In fact, these guidelines do not meet the requirements of Canada's Official Development Assistance Accountability Act, which states that ODA should contribute to poverty reduction, take into account the perspectives of poor people, and be compatible with international standards in terms of human rights protection.

## Question for the candidates

- Do you and your party intend on acting to ensure that Official Development Assistance no longer prioritizes Canada's economic interests? If so, how will you achieve this?

# For further information

Here are resources on issues relating to international aid:

## Provincial international cooperation councils

There are eight provincial and regional international cooperation councils. These councils and local member organizations represent more than 400 organizations throughout Canada that work to promote social justice and sustainable democratic development around the world. We recommend that you learn more about activities related to the federal election campaign organized by the council in your province or region.

- Alberta Council for Global Cooperation: [acgc.ca](http://acgc.ca)
- Association québécoise des organisations de coopération internationale: [aqoci.qc.ca](http://aqoci.qc.ca)
- British Columbia Council for International Cooperation: [bccic.ca](http://bccic.ca)
- Conseil atlantique pour la coopération internationale: [acic-caci.org](http://acic-caci.org)
- Ontario Council for International Cooperation: [ocic.on.ca](http://ocic.on.ca)
- Manitoba Council for International Cooperation: [mcic.ca](http://mcic.ca)
- Northern Council for Global Cooperation: [ncgc.ca](http://ncgc.ca)
- Saskatchewan Council for International Cooperation: [earthbeat.sk.ca](http://earthbeat.sk.ca)
- Canadian Council for International Cooperation: [ccci.ca](http://ccci.ca)

## Federal Election Guides

- Kairos Federal Election Resource: [councilofchurches.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/CCC\\_FederalElectionResource\\_FINAL\\_WEB\\_REV.pdf](http://councilofchurches.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/CCC_FederalElectionResource_FINAL_WEB_REV.pdf)
- United Church of Canada 2015 Federal Election Kit: [united-church.ca/getinvolved/takeaction/election](http://united-church.ca/getinvolved/takeaction/election)

## Resources on other topics

Here are additional resources for those who wish to do more research concerning issues addressed by Development and Peace as part of our educational campaigns.

### Mines

For more information on the issue of mining, we invite you to visit the website of the Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability (CNCA), with whom we worked closely in 2014 to conduct our *A Voice for Justice* campaign: [cnca-rcrce.ca](http://cnca-rcrce.ca)

### Food and agriculture

For more information on food, agriculture and seeds, we invite you to visit the following websites:

- Food Secure Canada (FSC): [campaign.foodsecurecanada.org](http://campaign.foodsecurecanada.org)
- National Farmer's Union: [nfu.ca](http://nfu.ca)
- USC Canada: [usc-canada.org](http://usc-canada.org)



CANADIAN CATHOLIC ORGANIZATION FOR  
**Development  
and Peace**