



ELCIC

*In Mission
for Others*

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

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September 23, 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:

On behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), I am writing to urge the government of Canada to support the **KYOTOplus goals**. Delegates to the ELCIC biennial National Convention, meeting in Vancouver, B.C. from June 25-28, 2009, passed a motion asking me, as National Bishop, to express this concern to our Federal, Provincial and Territorial governments.

This motion expressed the importance our members place on the **KYOTOplus goals**, namely:

- Set a national target to cut greenhouse gas emissions at least 25 per cent from 1990 levels by 2020.
- Implement an effective national plan to reach this target and help developing countries to reduce their emissions and adapt to climate change.
- Adopt a bold, strengthened second phase of the Kyoto Protocol at the pivotal United Nations Climate Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, December 2009.

Delegates recognize the serious threat to life on earth caused by global warming – that entire populations and ecosystems are threatened by devastating impacts such as drought, heat waves, fires, floods, storms and rising sea levels. For example, **The Global Humanitarian Forum: Geneva**, a think-tank led by former UN secretary general Kofi Annan, in a document titled “*The ‘Human Impact Report: Climate Change – The Anatomy of a Silent Crisis’*”, (see <http://www.ghf-geneva.org/>) has reported that climate-change disasters kill around 300,000 people a year and cause about \$125 billion (US) in economic losses, mainly from agriculture. The Forum also estimated that 325 million people are seriously affected by climate change – a number it says will double by 2030 as more people are hit by natural disasters or suffer environmental degradation caused by climate change. The report suggests that rising sea levels, desertification and changing rainfall patterns are reducing many people’s access to safe drinking water and food. This in turn increases diarrhea, malaria and malnutrition. The report said 99 percent of all people who died due to climate-change related causes live in developing countries, even though those countries generate less than one per cent of total emissions of greenhouse gases responsible for global warming. “Climate-change is a silent human crisis,” Annan said, “Yet it is the greatest emerging humanitarian challenge of our time.”

Scientists have warned the United Nations that only urgent action can avert uncontrollable, runaway climate-change. The members of the ELCIC expect the various levels of Canadian government to take a leadership role in working toward these goals within their own jurisdictions. Our church is

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asking you, as Prime Minister, to set the tone and lead the way. The upcoming UN Climate Conference is an opportunity to express Canada's commitment to the **KYOTOplus goals**.

Delegates are also asking members of our church to do their part, including encouraging ELCIC congregations to reduce their own carbon emissions by 25% and calling on members to reduce their personal carbon footprint.

On behalf of the members of The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada I urge you to work together with leaders from around the world to set national targets to cut greenhouse gas emissions at least 25 per cent from 1990 levels by 2020 and to develop and implement a plan that will help Canada reach these goals. I further urge you to work intentionally with those most affected by climate change, including those in Canada's north and in developing countries, to adapt to climate change.

Yours in Christ,

The Rev. Susan C. Johnson
National Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

cc: The Hon. Jim Prentice, Minister of the Environment
The Hon. Michael Ignatieff, Leader of the Opposition
The Hon. Gilles Duceppe, Leader of the Bloc Québécois
The Hon. Jack Layton, Leader of the New Democratic Party
The Hon. David McGuinty, Liberal Environment Critic
The Hon. Linda Duncan, NDP Environment Critic
The Hon. Bernard Bigras, Bloc Québécois Environment Critic
Archbishop Fred Hiltz, Primate, The Anglican Church of Canada
ELCIC National Church Council