



December 11, 2009

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington St.
Ottawa, ON
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Fax: (613) 941-6900

Dear Prime Minister Harper,

On behalf of Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ), I would like to convey our support for a reconsideration of the government's decision to discontinue funding for the international development program of KAIROS- Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives. CPJ is a national organization that promotes public justice in Canada as a response to God's call for love, justice, and care for the creation. CPJ does not receive program funding from the government. We are aware of the work being done by KAIROS and can attest to its quality and importance for the advancement of human rights and justice around the world.

The CJL Foundation
operating as CPJ.

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Throughout its history, CPJ has advocated for the development of strong, diverse civil society organizations in order to have a healthy democracy. The work done by non-governmental organizations like KAIROS is essential for the advancement of human rights, one of the primary objectives for Canada's international development program under the Better Aid Accountability Act, passed by parliament. Respect for human rights is also a high priority for Canadian citizens. If the KAIROS program does not fit within the current priorities of Canada's International Development Agency, then the guidelines being used by that department to implement the will of parliament with regard to Canada's development program need to be revised.

CPJ is concerned that this decision may be another in the trend to discontinue funding of groups who raise questions about current policies, thereby silencing some of the diverse voices that are essential for a healthy public debate about international issues of justice and stewardship of global resources. Along with a reconsideration of this decision, we suggest that your government clarify its position with regard to respect for the important, independent role of civil society organizations in the promotion of human rights and democracy, both globally and in Canada.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathy Vandergrift". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the closing "Yours sincerely,".

Kathy Vandergrift
Chair of the Board