

June 1st, 2015

The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq
Building 208, P.O. Box 1930 (Main Office)
Iqaluit, Nunavut X0A 0H0

Dear Minister Aglukkaq,

There is a growing demand for climate action among citizens. We call on governments to deliver a coherent and ambitious response that creates decent jobs and reduces inequalities. This is the foundation of a sustainable and just future.

The Canadian Union of Public Employees is affiliated to the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), which represents 176 million workers through its 325 affiliated organisations in 161 countries and territories. We are writing to convey to you union demands aimed at securing a strong global climate agreement, which will protect the lives and livelihoods of working people from the impacts of climate change and reassure workers and their communities of good jobs, social protection and secure pensions in transition to a zero carbon economy.

The international trade union movement is asking governments to:

- 1. Support a just, ambitious and binding agreement in Paris**, which will set the basis for medium and long-term emission reductions and a sustainable adaptation to the effects of climate change in developing countries. Governments must do their utmost to align the ambition of their Intended Nationally-Determined Contributions (INDCs) to the need to stay below 2°C temperature increase, assessing in good faith their responsibilities and capacities.

A clear pathway to attain the commitment to mobilise 100bn USD per year by 2020 must be provided by developed country governments, as these funds will be critical for supporting developing countries in their efforts to face the impacts of climate change and help them prosper with lower emissions.

- 2. Retain the references to the commitment to a Just Transition for workers in the current negotiating text in the final text, in particular in the operational section on “Objectives”:**

Para 15: [All Parties [and stakeholders] shall [ensure respect for human rights and gender equality in the implementation of the provisions of this agreement] (...) **All Parties should consider in their climate policies and actions a just transition of the workforce that creates decent work and quality jobs.] (...)**

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References to this commitment have already been adopted by previous COP decisions¹. And tripartite conclusions have been reached on the content of the concept of Just Transition at the International Labour Organization (ILO)².

Our expectation is that the agreement reached in COP21 will guide climate action by connecting it to the real world. This will ensure a commitment to social justice and reassure workers worldwide as we seek to gain their support for the far-reaching transformation that is needed.

- 3. Commit to develop a national energy plan which will decarbonise the economy and secure jobs.** Trade unions are conscious of the challenges posed by climate policies to specific sectors of the economy. But allowing those challenges to become divisive without taking measures to develop national and industry plans is not an option. We need leadership from our governments. We need a plan to decarbonize the economy. We need a Just Transition strategy for workers in the sectors that must be transformed. And we need it now.

Our trade union has therefore three simple questions to you:

- 1. Will your government's contribution (INDC) on emission reductions reflect our country's capacity and responsibility to do all we can to limit the temperature rise to 2°C or less?**
- 2. Will your government support the Just Transition language in the operational section of the climate agreement?**
- 3. Has your government committed to develop a national energy plan, or will your government commit to developing a national energy plan which will decarbonise the economy and secure jobs?**

We look forward to receiving your response.

Yours truly,



PAUL MOIST
National President



CHARLES FLEURY
National Secretary-Treasurer

¹ *Decision 1/CP16, under section I, A shared vision for long-term cooperative action, paragraph 10, governments* (document available at: https://unfccc.int/files/meetings/cop_16/application/pdf/cop16_lca.pdf)

"10. Realizes that addressing climate change requires a paradigm shift towards building a low-carbon society that offers substantial opportunities and ensures continued high growth and sustainable development, based on innovative technologies and more sustainable production and consumption and lifestyles, while ensuring a just transition of the workforce that creates decent work and quality jobs."

Decision 1/CP16; 1/CP17 on Economic and social consequences of response measures:

"Recognizing the importance of avoiding or minimizing negative impacts of response measures on social and economic sectors, promoting a just transition of the workforce, the creating of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities and strategies and contributing to building new capacity for both production and service-related jobs in all sectors, promoting economic growth and sustainable development."

² Paragraph 14 in the 2013 Resolution concerning sustainable development, decent work and green jobs

http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_223785.pdf