



March 26, 2015

The Honourable Christian Paradis, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of International Development  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister:

**Re: The CLC and the UN *Post-2015 Agenda* – Means of Implementation, Accountability and Global Governance**

The CLC continues to follow the evolution of the UN negotiations on the *Post-2015 Agenda*, and we wish to work with you and the Canadians involved in both the process of negotiations in the short term, and in follow-up implementation in the long term. The CLC would also like to nominate a representative to join the Canadian delegation next September at the UN when the *Agenda* will be adopted.

The following are comments for your consideration in the remaining steps of the negotiations at the UN.

**1. Priority Issues for the *Post-2015 Agenda*:** Quality education, health care, equality (gender and income equality), environmental protection, and universal access for everyone to sustainable energy, healthy and nutritious food, water and sanitation are notions that should be fully embraced by the *Agenda* and associated documents. This must be matched by additional and targeted investments in these areas, as well as in human resources development, training, and income-generating activities, especially for women, youth, and other vulnerable groups.

The references to AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in the current text are welcomed, but their demotion as "targets" is of concern, considering there is much unfinished business for fully meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on these issues. We suggest the following be added to goal #8 for promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, i.e. 8.8 could now read as follows with the underlined addition: "protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments of all workers, including migrant workers, particularly women migrants, workers living with HIV and those in precarious employment."

Quality public services must become a foundation of decent livelihoods for all.

We support the proposals contained in the working paper of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), "Working for Our Future - Trade Unions on the

Move for People, Planet and Prosperity,” which is located here: <http://documents.clc-ctc.ca/International/TU-Position-Stakeholder-ForumProgram-EN.pdf>.

We also support the proposed changes contained in a review by the ITUC of the recently released Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators, which is located here: <http://documents.clc-ctc.ca/International/ITUC-Indicators-Document.pdf>.

**2. Social Protection:** The capacity of countries to secure social protection and provide access to key services through national budgets and economic development should be a hallmark of the *Agenda*. International Labour Organization (ILO) instruments and measures for social security should be promoted, and technical assistance provided to fulfil specific objectives. This can be done by:

- Adopting a more accommodative macroeconomic framework
- Providing opportunities for favourable debt rescheduling and debt forgiveness
- Ring-fencing public expenditures on services to poor and low-income households
- Increasing social security contributions
- Increasing tax revenues and fighting illicit financial flows

**3. Decent Work:** The notion of decent work exists in the current text, but the reference to the ILO and ILO programs for decent work (for example, the Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCP) and indicators) need to be referenced to give practical meaning to effective implementation. To fulfil the Sustainable Development Goals’ (SDGs) objective of achieving decent work for all, comprehensive national employment policy frameworks must be adopted and implemented, such as through ILO Convention 122 on Employment Policy. Such frameworks should be developed through tripartite consultations that can build policy coherence for development. Pro-employment, macroeconomic policies that are supported by trade, industrial development, tax, infrastructure and sectoral policies, as well as investments in education and skills development should be pursued.

Within the macro frameworks, there is a need to ensure strong and functioning labour market policies and institutions. Specifically, appropriately designed wage policies, including minimum wages; collective bargaining; labour inspection; strong employment services; unemployment benefits with strong links to social protection programs; targeted measures to increase labour market participation of women and under-represented groups; as well as measures to help low-income households to escape poverty and access freely chosen employment.

A transformative shift towards sustainable development must be sought through the promotion of a green economy, coupled with investment for education, training, and lifelong learning. Decent work for youth can be facilitated by school-to-work transition programs, in line with the ILO’s “Global Strategy on Youth Employment.”

Governments need measures to protect freedom of association, as well as reinforce social partnership structures that support collective bargaining and link incomes to productivity and minimum wage levels. The respect of ILO core labour standards should be a minimum for workers everywhere, and States should provide the conditions for workers to join and form trade unions. Implementation of social protection floors and strengthening of labour institutions should aim to raise sustainable aggregate demand and create new jobs.

**4. Economic Development:** Emphasis should be placed on shaping the behaviour of financial markets through the implementation of the G20 commitments. Structural measures need to shield retail commercial banking activities from volatile investment banking and market trading. States must retain policy instruments to advance economic development goals amidst financial market instability, exchange rate volatility, and speculative flows. The G20/Financial Stability Board Action Plan must be implemented to regulate over-the-counter (OTC) derivatives trading and shadow banking. Global taxation (financial transactions tax and bank levies) on short term transactions is needed so as to prevent speculative behaviour, and to raise new sources of finance for the green economy.

International lenders, international financial institutions (IFIs), and multilateral and bilateral trade and investment agreements must not jeopardize or weaken developing national tools for structural transformation. Global trade must allow developing countries to attract investment and expand export markets while avoiding scenarios that entrap countries in low-end processing. National success stories must be shared, especially for controlling investment with joint venture rules, foreign ownership ceilings, and local content requirements.

The principles of fair trade should be promoted by existing investment treaties and agreements that guarantee the enforceability of national labour laws, and include clear and enforceable responsibilities for foreign investors, as they apply to supply chain decision-making and monitoring.

**5. Implementation:** A robust framework for implementation, monitoring and review need to be instituted through integrated national and international sharing of data and systematic analysis, which must produce evaluations and recommendations for follow up. Implementation should also relate to appropriate production and workplace issues, and to the joint actions of employers and trade unions as Major Groups. This is especially relevant to issues that pertain to the governance and monitoring of supply chains. For its goals and targets, the *Agenda* needs to outline the appropriate financial and non-financial measures that ensure accountability, through government standards and obligatory country reporting. Measures should be integrated with national and local inspection systems that are promoted by ILO Conventions 81 and 129.

Implementation should specifically focus on declining inequality in almost every sphere of life, but especially for access to key services and employment income. Focused and mandatory economic and financial policies, including changes for progressive taxation that seriously redistributes wealth, would be necessary.

Governments need to take measures to enhance social dialogue and participation of Major Groups and other stakeholders, in the formulating, implementing, and monitoring of sustainable development policies. The development of partnerships must be facilitated with these groups, where appropriate, to target economic planning and development that generate national incomes, create decent work, and implement investment policy for public and private sectors. Policies should target all economic activity, ranging from extraction and agriculture to value-added manufacturing and services. Structural transformation policies should aim at diversifying production, increasing intellectual content of goods and services (increasing value added), while guaranteeing constant improvement of energy efficiency as well as sustainable energy generation.

**6. Standards-based Accountability:** Policy coherence should be a major objective for all governments. They should be called upon to create administrative mechanisms for streamlining their post-2015 implementation and reporting, along with similar international human rights obligations. Accountability mechanisms should promote “mutual accountability,” “democratic ownership,” and “inclusive partnerships” (full participation of State and non-State actors, including private sector actors).

Commitments and agreed responsibilities must be met through binding measures, as opposed to current voluntary approaches. Commitments for monitoring must be rooted in the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) and the UN Declaration on the Right to Development (1986), and based on universal standards. A standards-based accountability mechanism built on existing agreements is needed to ensure broad accountability.

Multi-stakeholder participation should be a hallmark of the *Agenda*, with the promotion of social dialogue among specific actors for specific reasons. The ILO supervisory mechanism could serve as a model for creating unique international mechanisms of accountability for the *Agenda*.

**7. Global Governance and the Right to Development:** If the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) is meant to be the global governance body of the post-2015 framework, it must be built upon and adhere to the same principles that underpin the SDGs as a whole, and must be explicitly linked to the system of accountability. The global governance of the post-2015 framework should reaffirm the spirit of the UN Declaration on the Right to Development and grant three fundamental principles: “mutual accountability (donors and partners are accountable for development results), alignment of policies among partner countries (donor countries align behind policy objectives set by developing countries), and inclusive partnerships (full participation of State and non-State actors).”

The UN Declaration on the Right to Development further recognizes that, “the right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized.” Moreover, according to the Declaration, “States have the duty to co-operate with each other in ensuring

development and eliminating obstacles to development. States should realize their rights and fulfil their duties in such a manner as to promote a new international economic order based on sovereign equality, interdependence, mutual interest and co-operation among all States, as well as to encourage the observance and realization of human rights.”

At the heart of the duty to cooperate is the shift from individual State responsibilities (concerning the relationship between the State and the people under its jurisdiction) towards a broader concept of extraterritorial responsibility/obligations of States beyond their borders. Consequently, States (duty bearers) are accountable for a wider range of external policies like trade, debt, and finance in particular, that could undermine other aspects of the sustainable development *Agenda*.

The Millennium Declaration already recognized the principle of shared responsibility, calling for greater policy coherence and coordination at the international level. However, the accountability deficit of MDG 8, Develop a Global Partnership for Development, is self-evident. It should be clearly established that given the shift in the global development settings, the issue of shared responsibility should not be limited to State entities only, but should pertain to ‘non-State actors’ as well, such as private business and multilateral organizations, whose actions directly impact development processes and human rights.

In closing, please be aware that the CLC is committed to working toward proper follow-up in Canada of the *Post 2015 Agenda*, once it is adopted by the UN. We hope to work with the Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC) and its members to ensure its implementation in our country, and to work with you in the planning of the government’s follow-up measures.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Hassan Yussuff', written in a cursive style.

Hassan Yussuff  
President

cc: CLC Canadian Council  
CLC National Representatives  
CLC Regional Representatives  
CLC Post-2015 Working Group  
CLC HIV/AIDS Working Group  
Jonathan Arnold, Canadian Government DFATD  
Julia Sánchez, CCIC  
Sharan Burrow, ITUC