

27 November, 2015

The Honourable Stéphane Dion, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Foreign Affairs
125 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G2

Dear Minister Dion,

I am writing on behalf of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada to congratulate you on your party's victory in the federal election as well as on your recent cabinet appointment. I want to assure you of our prayers and extend our best wishes as you begin your new responsibilities as Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs.

MCC is a worldwide ministry of Anabaptist churches, sharing God's love and compassion for all in the name of Christ by responding to basic human needs and working for peace and justice. MCC Canada currently supports programs in 60 countries through the efforts of over 1,000 workers, 14,000 volunteers, and 122,000 members of supporting churches. Some of this work is generously supported by Global Affairs Canada.

We have been pleased to hear of your party's promises on a number of key international issues. In particular, given MCC's commitment to peacebuilding and our experience in conflict zones around the world, we affirm your party's pledge to help those impacted by war through increasing contributions to United Nations' mediation, conflict-prevention, and post-conflict reconstruction initiatives. And, as the widespread accessibility of cheap weapons is a key factor in exacerbating violence and displacement around the globe, we also welcome the commitment to ensuring Canada becomes a state party to the Arms Trade Treaty, a crucially important international convention. Finally, in light of MCC's over six decades of programmatic experience in the Middle East, we are encouraged by the promise to end Canada's combat role in Iraq and Syria while increasing much-needed humanitarian support on the ground.

As you work to revitalize Canada's foreign affairs agenda, MCC encourages you to build your department's capacity for responding creatively to the full array of complex international issues facing our world today. Indeed, we believe Canada has a valuable role to play within multilateral fora in promoting and implementing policies that build sustainable peace.

As we have with all Canadian governments over the past five decades, MCC will continue to offer our perspective and expertise—guided by the voices of our partners and the people we serve in Canada and abroad—in order to contribute to policies and interventions that are better able to address the profound challenges of our world.

Once again I wish you well and assure you of our prayers as you provide leadership for Canada's foreign affairs agenda. We look forward to engaging with you in constructive discussions on important public policy issues in the months and years ahead.

Sincerely,



Donald G. Peters
Executive Director
MCC Canada

CC: Hon. Tony Clement, Official Opposition Critic for Foreign Affairs, Conservative Party of
Canada
Hélène Laverdière, Opposition Critic for Foreign Affairs, New Democratic Party of Canada