

Relief, development and peace in the name of Christ

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

Dear Minister Freeland,

I am writing on behalf of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada to congratulate you on your recent cabinet appointment and to 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.

Given MCC's commitment to peacebuilding and our experience in conflict zones around the world, we affirm the Government of Canada's stated commitment to re-investing in mediation, conflict prevention, and post-conflict reconstruction initiatives, including through the United Nations. Indeed, we believe Canada has a valuable role to play within multilateral fora in promoting policies that address the complex causes of conflict and build sustainable peace. As the widespread accessibility of cheap weapons is a key factor in exacerbating violence and displacement around the globe, MCC is also eager to see Canada become a state party to the Arms Trade Treaty and to return as a global leader in disarmament efforts.

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. To this end, given that Canada's most recent comprehensive foreign policy review dates back to 2005, we would welcome the launch of an extensive public consultation process that will provide guidance on how aid, development, and trade fit into an overarching vision for Canada's role in the 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 Peters
Executive Director
MCC Canada

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