

Friday, August 5th, 2016

To the attention of

***The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada***  
***The Honourable Stéphane Dion, Minister of Global Affairs Canada***  
***The Honourable John McCallum, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada***

Mr. Prime Minister of Canada,  
Mr. Ministers,

In less than a week, the first ever World Social Forum (WSF) to take place in the global north will begin in Montreal, Quebec. Unless quick action is taken, a significant number of delegates from countries in the Global South will not attend due to unjustified delays and mass denials in visa processing at Canadian Embassies in several countries.

According to the preliminary data that we consolidated to this day, out of the 14% of the people that received an invitation, more than 70% of applications were denied. Among the countries most affected, we can find the Democratic Republic of Congo, Morocco, Iran, Haiti, Nigeria and Nepal, but this worrying situation was also found in Benin, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Ecuador, Ghana, Mali, Palestine, Togo, and more.

The preparation of the WSF has included a political and collective process, as well as the purchase of travel tickets and a lot of important costs that the organisations and social movements have shouldered in order to participate at the WSF. But activists from Latin America, Africa and Asia, have been refused visas based on unacceptable, exclusionary and discriminatory argumentation and within the framework of an outsourced visa application process that privatizes the rights of the people to freedom of movement and assembly.

As members of a large number of international, regional and national movements, networks and organisations, some of which have been part of the WSF process since its inception in 2001, we:

**- Request an urgent meeting with the competent authorities of the ministry of Global Affairs Canada and of the ministry of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, before the World Social Forum starts.**

**- Call on the ministry of Global Affairs Canada to fulfil Canada's international obligations to the right to freedom of associations** as articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was ratified by Canada. The World Social Forum (WSF) and the World Forum on Free Media (WFFM) are two of the most internationally recognized fora upholding this right.

**- Call on the ministry of Global Affairs Canada and of the ministry of Immigration,**

**Refugees and Citizenship Canada to approve, without further delay, all pending visa applications for the World Social Forum (WSF) and the World Forum on Free Media (WFFM), and to initiate immediate inquiries into all rejected applications, by measures such as a ministerial directive.**

**- Call on the ministry of Global Affairs Canada and of the ministry of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada to arrange visas-on-arrival to all delegates who have been refused.** Especially those refused on the grounds of "Purpose for the trip".

Sincerely yours,

**Contact:**

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**SIGNATORIES:**

Réseau québécois sur l'intégration continentale (RQIC), Canada

**Les membres du RQIC:**

\*Alliance du personnel professionnel et technique de la santé et des services sociaux (APTS), Canada

\*Alternatives, Canada

\*Association canadienne des avocats du mouvement syndical (ACAMS), Canada

\*ATTAC-Québec, Canada

\*Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale (AQOCI), Canada

\*Centrale des syndicats démocratiques (CSD), Canada

\*Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN), Canada

\*Centrale des Syndicats du Québec (CSQ), Canada

\*Conseil central du Montréal métropolitain-CSN (CCMM-CSN), Canada

\*Fédération étudiante collégiale du Québec (FECQ), Canada

\*Fédération des femmes du Québec (FFQ), Canada

\*Fédération interprofessionnelle de la santé du Québec (FIQ), Canada

\*Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec (FTQ), Canada

\*Génération nationale, Canada

\*Mouvement d'éducation populaire autonome et d'action communautaire du Québec (MÉPACQ), Canada

\*Réseau québécois des groupes écologistes (RQGE), Canada

\*Syndicat de professionnelles et professionnels du gouvernement du Québec (SPGQ), Canada

AITEC, France

Antennes de Paix Montréal, Canada

ATTAC – Argentina, Argentina

Attac – Austria

Attac - Norway

Attac France, France

Attac Togo, Togo  
Attac/CADTM Maroc, Maroc  
CADTM (Comité para la Abolición de las deudas ilegítimas), International network  
CEDETIM – IPAM, France  
Centre Europe-Tiers Monde (CETIM), Switzerland  
Centre international de solidarité ouvrière, Canada  
Centre justice et foi/revue Relations, Canada  
Collectif Forum Social Mondial 2016, Canada  
Comité pour les droits humains en Amérique latine, Canada  
Common Frontiers, Canada  
Conseil des Canadiens, Canada  
Ecologistas en Acción, Spain  
FASE - Solidariedade e Educação, Brazil  
Fédération Artisans du Monde, France  
Fédération SUD PTT, France  
Femmes autochtones du Québec, Canada  
Food & Water Watch, USA  
Frantz Fanon Foundation, International network  
Global Campaign to Reclaim Peoples Sovereignty, Dismantle Corporate Power and Stop Impunity, International network  
Global Justice Now (Attac UK), United Kingdom  
Groupe de recherche sur les espaces publics et les innovations politiques - GREPIP-UQAM, Canada  
Housing and Land Rights Network (HLRN-HIC), International network  
IBASE, Brazil  
Land Defense Coalition (Member organizations: Stop the Wall Campaign, Palestinian Farmers Union, Palestinian New Federation of Trade Unions, The Popular Council to Protect the Jordan Valley, Palestine Youth Forum, Association for Farmers' Rights and for the Preservation of the Environment, Women Center for Social Development, Association Jadayel/Palestinian Center for Culture, Arts and Creativity, Palestinian Farms Society-Tulkarem, N'lin Society for Development Community Work, Al-Amal Association for Childhood and Development), Palestine  
L'Entraide missionnaire, Canada  
Marcha Mundial das Mulheres / World March of Women, International network  
May First/People Link, USA  
Mexicanxs Unidxs Por la regularización ( MUR ), Canada  
MiningWatch Canada, Canada  
Norwegian Social Forum, Norway  
Observatorio de multinacionales en América Latina - Paz con Dignidad (Estado español), Spain  
Oekumenisches Buero fuer Frieden und Gerechtigkeit e.V., Germany  
OQSIDH, Canada  
Palestinian Farmers Union, Palestine  
Palestinian Grassroots Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign, Palestine  
Palestinian New Federation of Trade Unions, Palestine  
Projet Accompagnement Québec-Guatemala, Canada  
Réseau Solidarité Développement International, France  
Secours Catholique - Caritas France, France  
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Syndicat canadien de la fonction publique, Canada  
TNI - Transnational Institute, the Netherlands  
Trade Justice Network, Canada  
Union Juive Française pour la Paix, France

Union syndicale Solidaires, France  
USA Canada Alliance of Inhabitants, USA  
Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam Network, Nepal  
Védegylet Association, Hungary  
Vigilance OGM, Canada  
War on Want, United Kingdom