

September 14, 2009



The Right Hon. Stephen Harper, P.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

Dear Prime Minister Harper,

The National Union would like to express our concern that your refusal to appoint a Canadian representative to the new International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) will compromise Canada's future economic prosperity and further undermine our country's reputation in the global fight against climate change.

As one of the only developed countries and one of two G8 countries — Russia being the other — to take a pass on IRENA, we have missed a golden economic opportunity.

To build a low-carbon economy and stimulate clean jobs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century we must embrace renewable energies. This is an opportunity to share in technologies and policies that will play an important role in the global effort to control climate change, while fostering growth in a whole new economic sector.

New data published by the United Nations shows that in 2008, renewable energy systems such as wind and solar attracted more global investment than fossil fuels such as coal and natural gas. The Canadian renewable energy sector has also expanded rapidly over the past five years, although future growth is now at risk.

The international community expects that Canada will be there, at a time when it is crucial that the world work together to deploy renewable energies and green technologies for the common good, especially since this is a field in which Canada has vast experience and one that will, moreover, provide Canada with valuable economic benefits if its positioned to grab a share in the global market.

Once again, under your administration, the Canadian government is refusing to take part in international collaborative efforts. Your refusal to join international agencies and follow international conventions has severely diminished Canada's standing in the world.

Your government continues to turn its back on International Conventions that protect basic human dignity and rights through the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

In addition, Canada shamefully remains one of only nine countries in the world that refuses to ratify the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Convention No. 29 on Forced Labour. Unfortunately, this isn't the only shameful and egregious example of Canada's refusal to recognize international human rights. Canada is also refusing to ratify another fundamental Convention of the ILO, Convention No. 98 – Right to Organize and to Collective Bargaining.

It's time for Canada to rebuild its shattered international reputation and to cooperate in good faith with international efforts to solve the climate crisis, human rights abuses and poverty across the globe.

Sincerely,

James Clancy  
National President

cc. Hon. Michael Ignatieff, Leader of the Opposition  
Hon. Jack Layton, Leader of the NDP  
Hon. Jim Prentice, Minister of the Environment  
Hon. Lisa Raitt, Minister of Natural Resource  
Stephane Dion, MP  
Nathan Cullen, MP  
David McGuinty, MP.