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June 2, 2010

To: CAW Ontario Locals

Re: CAW Participation in People's Summit Events in Toronto this June

Greetings!

By now many of you have been reading the papers or listening to the news about the upcoming meeting of the G8 and G20 in Canada, June 25-27; meetings that involve the most powerful and influential economic nations in the world, including Canada.

The actions and policies discussed at the G8 and G20 meetings will have a significant impact on all people around the world. Despite the importance of these gatherings, civil society groups, social justice organizations, non-governmental organizations, aid groups, women's organizations and trade unions, among others, will have no access to the closed door discussions.

This year, world leaders have the opportunity to begin transforming the global economy, both its systems and institutions so that it can deliver decent work and sustainable development to all parts of the globe. Now is the time to establish policies that support fair trade, promote equality, alleviate poverty, protect our environment and hold the financial sector accountable for its actions, among other global issues.

Global leadership in tackling these challenges will also go a long way to supporting long overdue policy moves here at home to help Canadians fully recover from the recent economic landslide. Stemming the growth of precarious jobs and creating good jobs that promote sustainable economic development, strengthening our public pension system and public services and sheltering workers from the persistent risk of unemployment will go a long way to building a more prosperous and healthy economy.

Many women in developing countries enjoy few civil rights and have little liberty or say over what happens to their own bodies. Health experts right around the world agree that access to safe abortion must be a key element of any maternal health initiative. Yet Canada has said it wants to exclude abortion from Canada's funding for the G8 maternal health initiative. We need to vigorously challenge this as it breaks with Canada's traditional respect for a woman's freedom of choice.

But without a voice at the table, our solutions to these challenges will not be heard. The voice of the people has, once again, been shut out of global talks.

Leaders of these G8 and G20 nations have presided over the steady devastation of our world economy, which is still sending shockwaves through communities in every hemisphere. In the midst of so much devastation, instability, inequality and fear it's high time our voices are heard and our solutions taken seriously.

We need a coordinated international recovery strategy. We need green and decent job creation and public investments. We need a strong and viable pension plan. We need measures to reduce the risk of unemployment and wage losses of low-income earners, including single earner households that are overwhelmingly female-headed.

The CAW, in coordination with the broader labour movement, environmental organizations, social justice groups, student groups, women's groups and other representatives of civil society will be holding a series of important educational workshops, public rallies and events in the lead up to, and during, the G8 and G20 meetings. **This includes a peaceful public rally in Toronto on June 26. This rally will be lead by women.**

I encourage all CAW members to participate in as many of the events as possible (see attached for more details). However, I strongly urge that all local union leaders and members aim to participate in the **June 26 rally. Let's get a strong turn out of women!** I am looking forward to a strong and diverse showing of our union at this particular event.

We must collectively send Prime Minister Stephen Harper, and the Conservative government, a clear message. Our demands for decent jobs, equality, pension protection, sustainability and social justice must be heard.

For more information, contact: Annie Labaj, Director of the CAW International Department, at annie.labaj@caw.ca or 1-800-268-5763 (extension 8438) and for the rally Steve Watson, National Representative Education Department, at Steve.Watson@caw.ca or 1-800-268-5763 extension 8462.

I look forward to seeing you at the rally on June 26th!

In Solidarity,



KEN LEWENZA
National President

c.c. NEB, Ontario Area Directors, Ontario Staff Reps.