



# The United Church of Canada General Council

## GC36 Climate Change (1997C413)

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Whereas climate change has been identified as a priority environmental issue by the 33rd and 34th General Councils of The United Church of Canada and by the World Council of Churches (January 1994 Central Committee); and

Whereas the churches' concerns are based on a recognition that climate change threatens the well-being of human communities and broader ecosystems throughout God's Earth and is a profoundly ethical issue because it is being caused largely by emissions from the richer industrialized nations while the consequences will be suffered disproportionately by poorer developing countries and by future generations; and

Whereas the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the scientific body set up by the UN and the World Meteorological Organization, has come to the conclusion in their Second Assessment Report (1995) that "the balance of evidence suggests a discernible human influence on global climate"; and

Whereas the United Church of Canada has actively participated in the World Council of Churches' petition campaign on climate change aimed at pressuring governments of industrialized countries involved in the current UN negotiations to agree to a

binding international agreement to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions contributing to climate change; and

Whereas current estimates indicate that, unless significant steps are taken soon, Canada will not meet its commitment made at the Rio Earth Summit to stabilize its emissions at 1990 levels by the year 2000 and that after the year 2000 Canadian emissions will increase dramatically;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the 36th General Council...

- a. Call upon Canadian federal, provincial and territorial governments to take appropriate action to bring about a reduction in the emissions of greenhouse gases from Canadian sources and to agree in the current UN negotiations to a binding international treaty to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in industrialized countries;
- b. Congratulate the Canadian municipalities that are providing leadership in making commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions within their jurisdictions;
- c. Express support to the Taskforce on Churches and Corporate Responsibility for their efforts to pressure Canadian industry to acknowledge the seriousness of the threat of climate change and to take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, recognizing that such action can have both ecological and economic benefits;
- d. Express appreciation to United Church congregations and members for their active participation in the World Council of Churches' climate change petition campaign and to encourage them to continue to learn more about how they can pressure government and industry and what changes they can make in their churches and in their own lifestyles to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and
- e. Continue to cooperate actively with ecumenical partners, non-governmental organization, scientists, and others, in Canada and internationally, who are

committed to reducing the threat of climate change through changes in the society and in individual lifestyles.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the 36th General Council,

call upon federal and provincial governments to restore funding for environmental protection.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the 36th General Council call upon the members and adherents of The United Church of Canada to communicate with their municipal, provincial, and federal elected representatives concerning environmental issues.

Petition 34, GC36 p. 708-709, Minutes pp. 919-920

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