

On September 17, 2007, the Congregation's Leadership Team, based in Montreal, sent a letter to the new Minister of Foreign Affairs, asking him to take immediate action to adopt the consensus recommendations of the Report from the Roundtables on Extractive Industries. (A previous letter had been sent in March 2007 to the previous Minister, on this same question. The government had yet to act. At a minimum, the Leadership Team now requested an indication of the government's intentions in the Speech From the Throne.) A copy of the sisters' letter is reproduced below:

September 17, 2007

Honourable Maxime Bernier
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Lester B. Pearson Building
Tower A, 10th Floor
125 Sussex Drive,
Ottawa, ON K1A 0G2

Dear Mr. Bernier,

The Sisters and Associates of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame would like to congratulate you upon your recent appointment as our country's Minister of Foreign Affairs. We wish you every success in your important duties as the representative of our citizens, and their values, before the entire world.

Five months ago we wrote a letter (copy attached) addressed to your predecessor, the Honourable Peter MacKay. Our letter was intended to respectfully ask him to have the government adopt the consensus recommendations of the Report from the Roundtables on Extractive Industries. To date the recommendations of the companies, NGOs and academics remain without implementation.

In your capacity as Minister of Foreign Affairs, we ask that you quickly indicate your intentions in terms of this file.

We are convinced that the government should implement the recommendations which would elaborate a code of conduct for Canadian mining, oil and gas companies which operate overseas. There is a need to establish an Ombudsman's Office, with a view to evaluating complaints and investigating them, as well as to ensure that companies apply good practices. It is important for the federal government to announce its intention to act, perhaps in a forthcoming Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Bernier, thank you for your attention to our concerns. A representative of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame is usually present at the Foreign Affairs Department Days of Consultation with the NGOs, held in Ottawa during February. We are at your service should you care to meet and discuss these questions further.

Members of the Congregation Leadership Team – Congrégation de Notre-Dame

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