

# dignity for all: the campaign for a poverty-free canada

## Dignity for All Campaign calls for end to poverty in Canada

May 22, 2009

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Calgary, AB:** Now is the time to end poverty in Canada. That's the key message of the Dignity for All Campaign, launched today in Calgary. Dignity for All: The Campaign for a Poverty-Free Canada aims to eliminate poverty and build a more socially secure and cohesive Canada by the year 2020.

"We believe that freedom from poverty is a human right," said Rob Rainer, Executive Director of Canada Without Poverty (CWP), one of the two founding organizations of this campaign. "Vigorous and sustained action from the federal government is required to help eliminate poverty in Canada. We are calling on the federal government to act."

"There is momentum across the country," observes Joe Gunn, Executive Director of Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ), the other co-founder of the campaign. "We're seeing organizations, cities, provinces and territories take action. It is time for the federal government to step up and do its part."

Today's launch featured presentations in English, French, Blackfoot and Mandarin, highlighting the reality that people from across the country must work together to address poverty in Canada. "Everyone has a role to play," notes Kelly Law, Associate Director of CWP. "A coalition of social justice, labour, and human rights organizations representing hundreds of thousands of people is forming in support of Dignity for All. We welcome individuals, local community groups, and provincial and national organizations to join us in working together to create change."

"People of faith play an important part too," adds Karri Munn-Venn, CPJ Policy Analyst. "We come from different backgrounds and perspectives, but we all believe that every human being deserves to live with dignity, free from poverty and in a situation of social and economic security."

In particular, the Dignity for All campaign seeks a federal plan for poverty elimination, a federal anti-poverty Act that ensures federal commitment, and sufficient federal investment in social security for all Canadians.

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Dignity for All: The Campaign for a Poverty-Free Canada was founded by Canada Without Poverty and Citizens for Public Justice in 2009. Inaugural Campaign Committee: ACORN Canada, Campaign 2000, Canadian Association of Social Workers, Canadian Cooperative Association, Canadian Council on Social Development, Canadian Labour Congress, Canadian Teachers' Federation, Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation, Make Poverty History, and the Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry, in consultation with the Collective for a Poverty-Free Quebec.

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### For more information, contact:

Karen Diepeveen  
Communications Coordinator  
Citizens for Public Justice  
(613) 232-0275, x. 225

Marti Bogue  
Canadian Social Forum Media Centre (Calgary)  
Canadian Council on Social Development  
(613) 875-7835