



Abortion Rights
Coalition of Canada

Coalition pour le droit à
l'avortement au Canada

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June 23, 2010

Prime Minister Stephen Harper
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Harper,

Over 3,400 Canadians from across Canada have signed a petition demanding that you include funding for safe abortion and family planning in your signature G8 maternal and child health initiative. With this letter, we are presenting you with a complete printout of the petition signers. (The online petition is located at: <http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/safe-abortion.html>)

The views of the signers represent the views of most Canadians. A poll released this week by Nanos Research shows that 67.7% of Canadians want women in developing countries to receive the same access to safe abortion as women in Canada do.

In addition, three different polls over May/June showed that 58%, 61%, and 56% (respectively) of the Canadian public support the inclusion of safe abortion funding in the G8 initiative. (Polls were done by Canadian Press-Harris Decima, Leger Marketing, and Ipsos Reid).

These polls completely belie your claim on April 27 that “Canadians want to see their foreign aid money used for things that will help save the lives of women and children in ways that unite the Canadian people rather than divide them”.

Mr. Harper, by excluding funding for safe abortion, you have indeed divided the Canadian people, and you have re-opened the abortion debate you said you didn't want to re-open. Further, if you impose your right-wing ideology onto developing countries by excluding safe abortion – against the advice of all the experts – your maternal health initiative will probably fail. The worst part is that your politicizing of this issue is being done at the expense of the health and lives of the 20 million women a year who resort to unsafe, mostly illegal abortion – 70,000 of whom die every year. These women leave behind 220,000 orphans who are 10 times more likely to die within the next two years because they don't have a mother.

Mr. Harper, it is unspeakably immoral to trade the lives of hundreds of thousands of women and children in developing countries for votes from your right-wing base at home. We urge you to immediately reverse your decision and assure the G8 leaders that your maternal health initiative will not exclude any life-saving healthcare for women in developing countries, including safe abortion where legal, and quality post-abortion care for women with complications from unsafe abortion.

Thank you.

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Attachments: Petition with 3,433 signers
Press release: June 23
Press release: June 9