



August 16, 2022

The Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau

Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A2
justin.trudeau@parl.gc.ca

The Hon. Sean Fraser

Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship
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House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6
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Cc: Migrant Rights Network - info@migrantrights.ca

RE: Climate Justice means Permanent Residence for All

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau and Minister Fraser,

We are writing to you today to ask you to take a bold step towards equal rights through the regularization of all undocumented people and ensuring permanent residence for all migrants living in Canada.

The COVID-19 pandemic has opened many Canadians' eyes to the injustices faced by migrants living in this country - and to our dependence upon their labour. At the height of the pandemic, migrants continued to perform essential work in hospitals, to care for children and the elderly, and to grow and deliver food, all the while [facing](#) exploitation, inadequate care, and [unsafe working conditions](#).

Canada's measures to fast-track applications from people fleeing the war in Ukraine, without a limit, show that we are capable of acting with urgency and compassion. This same empathy must be extended to all migrants.

Providing permanent resident status is a first step towards making sure that migrants can access services, speak up for their rights without fear of reprisal, and build a safe, stable future here for their families. In May, a unanimous [Parliamentary motion](#) called for allowing workers of all skill levels to access permanent residency. Right now, you have a strong mandate and a unique opportunity to correct a deep injustice in Canadian society.

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You face a political choice: you can create a partial, small and exclusionary program that will give rights to a few and deny them to most - or you can seize this moment to secure equal rights for all by extending permanent residence to 1.7 million migrants, including 500,000 undocumented migrants.

We call on you to regularize all undocumented people without exception and to establish immediate access to permanent residence for all migrants, including those in low-waged jobs. We support the [Migrant Rights Network's recommendations](#) to develop a broad program with a simple and clear application process, no exclusions or inadmissibility, and no detentions or deportations, to be promoted through a comprehensive communications strategy.

This is a question of justice. Climate change exacerbates economic inequality between the richest countries - who are responsible for most of the world's emissions - and the poorest, already marginalized and racialized groups - who bear climate impacts first and hardest.

Canada is one of the world's top greenhouse gas emitters, as well as the home of mining and resource extraction companies that degrade natural resources and destroy land-based ways of life in the Global South. The climate crisis fuels displacement in a myriad of ways: through disasters, droughts, and famines, loss of livelihood, shrinking economic opportunities, and mass impoverishment. Extending equal rights to migrants is a first step towards taking responsibility for the harm our country continues to cause - and it would encourage the sharing of the crucial resilience and adaptability [expertise](#) those on the front lines of the climate crisis bring to communities in Canada.

Your government has repeatedly [championed](#) the vision of Canada as a welcoming, diverse safe haven. The reality for many migrants, however, is still one of uncertainty, fear, and exploitation. The [mandate letters](#) sent to ministers last fall declared, "This is the moment to rebuild a more resilient, inclusive and stronger country for everyone... We must continue to address the profound systemic inequities and disparities that remain present in the core fabric of our society."

We urge you to seize this moment to address one of these profound injustices by extending permanent residence to all migrants, leaving no one behind.

Sincerely,

Climate Action Network - Réseau action climat Canada

As Canada's widest network of organizations working on climate and energy issues, our members include over 140 youth, faith, labour, First Nations, health, development, social justice, grassroots, and environmental groups, who in turn represent the concerns of millions of Canadians from coast to coast.

Blue Green Canada
Canadian Interfaith Fast For the Climate
Canadian Voice of Women for Peace
Citizens for Public Justice
Climate Reality Project Canada
ClimateFast
Collaborative Network to End Exploitation (CNEE)
Environmental Defence
Foire ÉCOSPHÈRE
Fondation David Suzuki
Grand(m)others Act to Save the Planet GASP
Green 13
Green Majority Radio
Greenpeace Canada
Leadnow
MiningWatch Canada
Shift: Action for Pension Wealth & Planet Health
Toronto350
Travailleuses et Travailleurs pour la Justice Climatique
West Coast Environmental Law Association
Wilderness Committee