

**Budget 2017 lacks long-term strategy and undermines Canadian leadership in global sustainable development**

*Civil society calls for the Canadian government to put words into action and increase Canada's international assistance envelope*

OTTAWA, 22 March 2017—Budget 2017 has failed to provide the predictable investment needed to increase Canadian leadership internationally and contribute to the realization of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), says a group of Canadian civil society organizations.

The new Budget proposes no new increase to the International Assistance Envelope (IAE) — the funding used for Canada's poverty reduction programs overseas. This is in spite of the Government's commitment in last year's budget that Budget 2017 would be informed by the outcomes of the International Assistance Review. These results have still not been announced, though the consultation process ended in July of 2016. The mandate of the Minister of International Development and La Francophonie to implement a new funding framework for Canada's international assistance similarly remains unfulfilled.

"We are deeply disappointed in the Government's decision not to increase Canada's aid envelope," stated Julia Sánchez, President—CEO of the Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC). "The Government says it wants to improve Canada's reputation as a global leader among its peers – and to reach the most in need, in particular women and girls. With Budget 2017, Canada falls short on one key metric: the broad and significant financial commitment necessary to achieve this objective."

In November 2016, the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development called on the government to spend 0.35 percent of Gross National Income (GNI) by 2020 on official development assistance (ODA), and to reach 0.7% by 2030. In December, the Finance Committee concurred in its Report on the Pre-Budget consultations. At an estimated 0.26%, Canada's development spending is well below the internationally agreed 0.7% target and near an all-time Canadian low.

"We know first-hand the impacts that ODA can have in people's lives – these are investments in their health, education and well-being, in reducing poverty in communities, and in fostering greater global prosperity, security and stability," Ms. Sánchez added. "The Prime Minister himself has acknowledged this with his announcement to the world of \$650 million to support women's sexual and reproductive health and rights. We welcome this commitment. However, with no new and additional funding in Budget 2017, the Government is simply robbing Patricia to pay Paula. Looking forward, Canada must invest new and additional funds in the International Assistance Envelope if it is serious about tackling global poverty."

As Canada prepares to host the next G7 Summit in 2018, Canadian civil society organizations are urging the Government to announce a timetable of ambitious and predictable increases to its IAE. This will translate Canada's international assistance policy and its commitment to the SDGs into action. In September 2015, the 193 member states of the United Nations—including Canada— adopted the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a universal agenda to eradicate global poverty.

## Notes for Editors

### About the Canadian Council for International Co-operation

The Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC) is Canada's national coalition of civil society organizations (CSOs) working globally to achieve sustainable human development. Our members represent a broad range of CSOs working in international development and humanitarian assistance — from faith-based and secular groups to labour unions, cooperatives and professional associations. CCIC seeks to end global poverty and to promote social justice and human dignity for all.

### About the Official Development Assistance (ODA) Collaborative Working Group

A group of organizations has been working together since 2016 to enhance Canada's global contributions, including higher levels of ODA, and in response to the Liberal Government's early announcement that Canada would re-engage as a global leader on the international stage. This group expects to see a commitment to doubling the IAE over the next 7 years and a predictable timeline to reaching 0.7%, with at least a 12% increase in 2017. Organizations of the ODA Collaborative Working Group include: Canadian Council for International Co-operation, Canadian Foodgrains Bank, Canadian International Development Platform, Canadian Partnership for Women and Children's Health, Engineers Without Borders, One Campaign, Oxfam Canada, Oxfam Québec, Plan International Canada, RESULTS Canada, Save the Children and World Vision Canada.

**For more information and media requests, including for interviews with the different organizations of the collaborative group, please contact:** Chantal Havard, CCIC, Tel.: 613-241-7007 ext. 311 [chavard@ccic.ca](mailto:chavard@ccic.ca)



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