

## **Sunshine Walkers Demand Climate Justice From Government**

Ottawa - A group of concerned citizens who set out by foot Saturday, October 4 on a 400 km journey from Toronto will arrive in Ottawa today, calling for climate justice outside the Prime Minister's Office at 80 Wellington street at 12:00 noon.

"No matter who is leading government or the various parties, the climate and economic crisis must be front and centre over any other issues now," says the group of walkers who, under the banner "The Sunshine Walk", wanted to communicate the deep desires Canadians have for real renewable solutions to climate change. "But focusing on partisan politics, electioneering or party rebuilding is equivalent to tilting at windmills instead of building them or fiddling while Rome burns."

The walkers -- Dewan Afzal, Rita Bijons and Adriana Mugnatto-Hamu -- are speaking a few doors down (and a few hours before) Stephane Dion's expected press conference announcing he would be stepping down as Liberal party leader.

"Canadian leaders of government must put aside their petty differences and work together to implement solutions now," says Mugnatto-Hamu. "We need rapid response on global warming and better solutions than nuclear and 'clean' coal. Truly sustainable energy sources, such as solar, wind, geothermal and marine power exist now and we don't need to rely on oil, gas and nuclear, all of which actually deepen the global climate and economic crises".

"Canada is repeatedly called upon to meet its commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions," says Afzal. "Our emissions are having a devastating impact, especially on developing parts of the world. Canadians demand that the first task of our new government is to create green jobs and green energy."

On its way to Ottawa, the Sunshine Walk passed through over 50 cities and towns where walkers met with local candidates during the election to ask them to sign the KYOTOplus pledge, which includes a promise to support "strong measures in support of energy conservation and renewable energy" and "urgent measures to minimize climate change impacts on people and ecosystems here and abroad."

The Sunshine Walkers also asked other concerned citizens to join them along the way, for some or all of the walk, and to give them their climate solutions in a letter, drawing or photograph for our next government. These letters will be delivered to the PMO today.

"Canadians deserve a government that thinks outside of the tar sands, toward a more secure energy future for Canada," says Andrea Harden, Energy Campaigner with the Council of Canadians, one of several organizations sponsoring the walk, including Greenpeace, the David Suzuki Foundation, the Sierra Club of Canada, the Climate Action Network, the Canadian Federation of Students, the Polaris Institute and others. "We demand a government that prioritizes the interests of people and the environment not corporate profits, and plans for a just transition to publicly funded and delivered sustainable, renewable energy."

"The world is deserving of true leadership in Canada on climate change," says Bijons. "Our government has been using our tax dollars to subsidize dirty energy like tar sands and nuclear power for too long. We want that money to be spent implementing clean, sustainable energy solutions instead. It's also time Canada worked toward facilitating a global shift to alternatives and played a leadership role in influencing other G8 nations to embrace clean energy."

Catch up on the Sunshine Walk at [sunshinewalk08.blogspot.com](http://sunshinewalk08.blogspot.com)

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