



For immediate release

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## **Working families want withdrawal from Afghanistan**

OTTAWA – The Canadian Labour Congress calls for the withdrawal of Canada's troops in Afghanistan and an increase of our commitment to the reconstruction and development of that country.

At its regular spring meeting earlier this week, the Executive Council of the Canadian Labour Congress commended the courage and bravery of all the men and women serving in Afghanistan. The Executive Council, which brings together the senior leaders of the country's largest unions along with the presidents of the provincial and territorial federations of labour, adopted a statement that also denounces the fact that our federal government "has moved beyond the NATO mission of humanitarian relief and peacekeeping to an active combat role in support of the US military mission in Afghanistan. In so doing, our government has put Canadian troops in harm's way in an unprecedented manner."

The Executive Council of the Canadian Labour Congress does not "accept the argument that Canadian presence is intended to bring democracy to the people of Afghanistan. Nor do we accept the premise that our presence is intended to put Afghanistan on the road to sustainable development or improve women's equality in that country."

That is why the Canadian Labour Congress urges the government to:

- take the necessary measures to ensure the safe and immediate withdrawal of Canadian troops from Afghanistan;
- increase significantly our resource and financial commitments to UN-led multilateral peacekeeping and humanitarian initiatives such as is needed in Darfur;
- strengthen developmental aid to Afghanistan so that reconstruction efforts are achieved and engage civil society in developmental programs fostering good governance, and respecting human rights, gender equality and internationally-recognized core labour standards;
- ensure any future deployment of Canadian troops is debated and voted on by the representatives of the citizens of Canada in the House of Commons.

The Canadian Labour Congress, the national voice of the labour movement, represents 3 million Canadian workers. The CLC brings together Canada's national and international unions along with the provincial and territorial federations of labour and 135 district labour councils. Web site: [www.canadianlabour.ca](http://www.canadianlabour.ca)

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