

December 2, 2008

Public participation is key to resolution of Canadian political crisis

On Monday December 1, 2008, two historic documents were signed in Ottawa in response to the Harper government's November 27 Economic Update.

The Accord to Address the Present Economic Crisis, signed by the leaders of the three opposition parties, Liberal Stéphane Dion, NDP Jack Layton and Bloc Québécois Gilles Duceppe, details how the three parties will work together to address the current economic crisis.

The Accord to Form a Cooperative Government to Address the Present Economic Crisis, signed by Liberal Stéphane Dion and NDP Jack Layton sets out the terms by which the two parties would form a coalition government.

The stated plan is to force a non-confidence vote in Parliament as early as Monday December 8. The Coalition leaders would then ask Governor General Michaëlle Jean to call on the Coalition to form the next government.

The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) and the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF), to which OECTA is affiliated, say that the Economic statement did not contain measures to address the needs of

Canadians. "The Harper government was out of step with Canadian values in playing a game of chance with human rights, equity in the workplace and fundamental democratic imperatives," says CTF.

The CLC is urging Canadians to support the Coalition and its economic principles and calling for an economic stimulus package. It is organizing support rallies on Thurs. Dec. 4 and Sat. Dec 6. See <http://canadianlabour.ca/> for background and rally details.

Seeking support to persuade the Governor General to deny the Coalition's request, Conservatives are also planning rallies across the country on December 6. They are using radio ads suggesting it's un-Canadian for the Liberal NDP coalition to replace them in government. Information can be found at <http://www.rallyforcanada.ca/>

OECTA encourages members to be politically active. We have a long a history of advocating for social justice and basic democratic rights. All members are encouraged to participate in these historic events. Write to your newspaper, email your MP, join a rally in your community. Voice your concerns, opinions and needs.