



**Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace – *Caritas Canada* (CCODP)
and
Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB)**

Joint Statement

4 May 2020

On Tuesday 28 April 2020, the Executive Committees of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) and the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace – *Caritas Canada* (CCODP) held their second joint working session. It was an effective encounter that paves a clearer way forward and confirms a joint effort and commitment by the National Council – the governance body of CCODP – and the CCCB Executive Committee as representatives of the Conference of Bishops who are the Shepherds of the Church in Canada.

Discussions focused on coming to the agreement to implement the recommendations and specifications of the organizational analysis of CCODP commissioned by the Bishops, accepted by CCODP and carried out by Deloitte. At their first joint meeting in November 2019, the CCCB Executive conveyed to the CCODP National Council the Conference's expectations and hopes in view of working together to implement the recommendations of the organizational analysis and further specifications. These latter address the areas of governance, crisis management, partnership criteria, organizational culture, transparency and communications. In response to this proposal in moving forward together, the CCODP National Council, at this second joint meeting, formally committed itself to participate in this important endeavour.

As a first priority of the implementation process, the governance structure currently in place for CCODP's National Council will be reviewed and revised. The number of elected officials will be reduced from 21 to 11 and four Bishops will be appointed by the CCCB for a total of fifteen members. This new structure will promote greater alignment with the Bishops' expectations and ecclesial vision, will allow for a more fruitful collaboration, and will lead to improved efficiency, transparency and accountability in all decision-making processes. A joint committee will soon be established to begin the implementation process. In respecting its community-based nature of regional assemblies and diocesan committees, CCODP will carry out this renewal in continuity and openness to change. The current CCODP National Council will be working on this renewal with the CCCB Executive Committee (mandated by the CCCB Permanent Council). The new CCODP National Council will be established this fall. In parallel with this process there will be the conclusion of a review of CCODP's international partnerships.

Thus, at the conclusion of the 28 April 2020 working session, CCCB Vice President Bishop Raymond Poisson, on behalf of the other members of the Executive Committee, summed up the feelings of all participants when he said, *“What joy to feel there is greater solidarity than ever in this endeavour that is so essential to the mission of the Church. National Council has already undertaken a series of decisions toward restructuring. This means we can announce our future cooperation together with a new National Council that includes Bishops and CCODP elected members which will strengthen the relationship which is necessary to the mission, while respecting everyone’s roles and in all faithfulness to the spirit of Caritas Internationalis!”*

Likewise, Mrs. Evelyne Beaudoin, President of CCODP’s National Council, said: *“The spiritual guidance of the Bishops in putting into action Catholic Social Teaching, particularly the Preferential Option of the Poor, will be an important contribution in walking side by side with the poorest of our sisters and brothers in the Global South.”*