

2018-2019

# ANNUAL REPORT

GROUPE  
D'ORIENTATION  
POLITIQUE  
POUR LES  
AMERIQUES



AMERICAS  
POLICY  
GROUP

Un groupe de travail du CCCI  
A working group of CCIC

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. COLLECTIVE WORK OF THE REGIONAL WORKING GROUPS: POLICY &amp; ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
• Government relations & policy advocacy	
• Sector-wide campaign	
• Coalition collaboration	
<b>2. AMERICAS POLICY GROUP (APG) .....</b>	<b>5</b>
• Government relations & policy advocacy	
• Parliamentary relations	
• Member-led Annual Meeting	
• Academic collaborations & learning activities	
<b>3. APG MEMBERS 2018 – 2019 .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>4. APG STEERING COMMITTEE .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>5. RWG TEAM .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>6. FINANCES .....</b>	<b>20</b>

## 03

# 1. COLLECTIVE WORK OF THE REGIONAL WORKING GROUPS: POLICY & ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

## 1.1 Government relations & policy advocacy

- Ongoing dialogues and consultations with the regional branches at Global Affairs Canada, in particular the Sub-Saharan Africa Branch and its Pan-Africa Bureau; the Americas Branch and its North America, Central America, Latin America & Caribbean Bureaux; and the Asia-Pacific Branch and its Southeast Asia bureau. As well, briefing meetings with Canadian diplomatic representatives in **Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Peru & Bolivia, and Philippines**;
- Ongoing facilitation of the RWG's perspective to Global Affairs Canada ongoing consultation on its "**Voices at Risk – Canada's Guidelines on Supporting Human Rights Defenders**";
- August 2018 | Supported the launch of the training manual "**Implementing a Human Rights -Based Approach**" with CCIC and Equitas.



HRBA TRAINING MANUAL

[click here to download](#)

## 1.2 Sector-wide campaign

- Ongoing representation on behalf of CCIC and active support of the **Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability** and the campaign calling for the creation of an independent human rights Ombudsperson for Canada's international extractive sector.

# 04

## 1.3 Coalition collaboration

- April 2018 | Supported the **Women Resisting Extractivism International Gathering** in Montreal. Along many *RWG members*, *45 land defenders from over 20 countries* spoke truth to power and strategized on global resistance;



- Fall 2018 | Collaborated with **AQOCI** on three regional forums on **Latin America, Africa and Haiti** to enhance greater coordination amongst members;
- December 2018 | Supported the “Women of Courage Speak Out for Peace” delegation led by KAIROS, during the *16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence*, which brought forward the voice of inspiring and courageous women from **South Sudan, Palestine, Democratic Republic of Congo, Colombia and the Philippines.**

## 2. AMERICAS POLICY GROUP (APG)

### 2.1 Government relations & policy advocacy

The APG pursues ongoing monitoring, policy recommendations and advocacy for sustainable development, human rights and social justice in the Americas, in particular in **Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Colombia and Haiti**. The policy and advocacy work are mainly led by the APG subgroups for Mesoamerica, Colombia, and the newly one for Haiti.

#### Guatemala

- Briefing: The APG has been closely monitoring the alarming escalation of attack against environment and human rights defenders since the summer of 2018, as well as the deterioration of the rule of law in the country exacerbated by the government's withdrawal of the UN International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG);
- May 2018 | Supported an environmental defenders delegation from Guatemala, led by Amnesty International Canada. While in Canada, **Sister Maudilia Lopez Cardona and Aniseto Lopez Diaz** spoke about the harmful legacy left by Goldcorp's Marlin mine in western Guatemala and demanded that the Canadian company and the Guatemalan State be held accountable for future human rights and environmental harms;

## 06

- May 2018 | While in Ottawa, the delegation with APG members also delivered letters to both the Guatemalan ambassador to Canada, and to the Canadian ambassador to Guatemala raising concerns over the sharp rise of killings in 2018 of several campesino organizers from **CODECA** and the **CCDA**. In June, APG members had a follow-up teleconference with the Canadian diplomatic personnel in Guatemala and officials at Global Affairs Canada;



- September 2018 | Sent a letter of concerns to Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs regarding the alarming government's withdrawal of the **UN International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG)** and on the disturbing escalation of assassination of land and human rights defenders;



# 07

- November 2018 | Supported the visit of **Marcelo Subuc Xalcot**, National Coordinator of the Campesino Committee of the Highlands of Guatemala and organized debriefing meetings with GAC officials;



- December 2018 | Held a teleconference meeting with **Canada's new Ambassador to Guatemala**, Rita Rudaitis-Renaud, and her team to brief her on our priority policy concerns.

## Mexico

- Briefing: Since 2017, the APG has been involved in ongoing discussions with Global Affairs Canada's North America Strategy Bureau regarding the annual **Canada-Mexico Human Rights bilateral government dialogue**;

# 08

- June 2018 | Held a debrief meeting with Kevin Thompson, Director General for North America Strategy Bureau following the 2nd edition that took place in May 2018, Mexico;
- March 2019 | Held a consultation meeting with Sylvia Cesaratto, Executive Director of the North America Policy & Relations desk where APG members provided recommendations for the 2019 upcoming edition to be held in Ottawa. Recommendations include proposals to increase Mexican CSOs participation in the process. [\*Click here to read the APG 2019 recommendations;\*](#)



- October 2018 | Sent a welcome open letter to **Mexican Interior Secretary-Designate Olga Sánchez Cordero** pointing out key issues for the new Mexican government, the future of the Canada-Mexico relationship and calling for respect of rights of migrants. [\*Read the full open letter here.\*](#)



## Honduras

- Briefing: The APG has been highly concerned with the human rights crisis unfolding in Honduras and the incarceration of peaceful demonstrators and civil society activists, following the November 2017 elections that were determined to be highly irregular by the international community, including the OAS and the OHCHR. APG has continued to denounce the situation, which has exacerbated the migrant exodus from Honduras;
- May 2018 | Participated on the day of action on Parliament Hill, along the Simcoe County Honduras Rights Monitor delegation including the Spring Family, to denounce the detention of 22 prisoners and stand in solidarity with the people of Honduras;



# 10

- July 2018 | Held briefing meeting with the new senior policy advisor posted at Canada's consulate office in Tegucigalpa, Honduras;
- February 2019 | Accompanied delegation members to Parliament Hill to witness the introduction of a petition to the House of Commons by **Alexander Nuttall**, Conservative MP for Barrie–Springwater–Oro-Medonte, calling Canada “to stand by its stated position of supporting human rights and rule of law in Honduras; intervene for the release of the remaining five prisoners (including Edwin Espinal); and that the Hernandez government drop all charges against the 22 political prisoners that were and remain detained”. Members of the Simcoe County Honduras Rights Monitor group, whom initiated the petition, were also in Ottawa to witness the tabling of the petition in the House of Commons. [Read more here.](#)



# 11

## Colombia

- Briefing: For over a decade, the APG has denounced the shrinking of civic spaces and monitored the Peace process in Colombia, as well as called for the reform of the Canada-Colombia Free-trade Agreement's Human Rights Report (CCoFTA);
- May 2018 | Held a debrief meeting with H.E. Marcel Lebleu, **Canada's Ambassador to Colombia**, to discuss the peace process, electoral context, trade and human Rights, and on the spike in threats, attacks, and assassinations of human rights defenders in Colombia. An introduction meeting was also held with Canada's ambassadors to Peru/Bolivia and Chile;
- October 2018 | Supported the speaking tour of the Civic Strike Leaders from Buenaventura, Colombia during their speaking tour to Canada and meetings with several parliamentary caucus, and GAC officials. *[Read more here;](#)*





# 12

- March 2019 | Held a *consultation meeting* with Global Affairs Canada's South American bureau and representatives of the Trade Agreement secretariat. APG members provided on feedback on how to improve the annual CCoFTA Human Rights report, mainly to fix the current flaws in the process, methodology and scope.



## Haiti

- A **new** subgroup on Haiti was launched following several consultations with members, partners and approved by APG's Steering Committee. [Read full article here.](#)

# 13

- May 2018 | Held an introduction meeting between the new APG-Haiti subgroup and Claude Beauséjour, Program Director for **Haiti** at GAC.



## 2.2 Parliamentary Relations

- May 2018 | Hosted a roundtable with Members of Parliament of the **Canadian section of ParlAmericas** and Women land defenders resisting extractivism in Latin America. ParlAmericas Members heard testimony from women indigenous activists from Colombia, Peru, Guatemala and Canada on how they are defending Human Rights.



# 14

They also demanded that Canadian mining and extractive companies be made accountable for their operations abroad and that Canada implement an independent and robust ombudsperson.



- December 2018 | APG co-chair, Steve Stewart, testified at the House of Commons' **Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration** as an expert witness on migration in Latin America.

*[Parliamentary Notice here](#)*

*[Listen here](#)*

*[Read transcript here](#)*

# 15

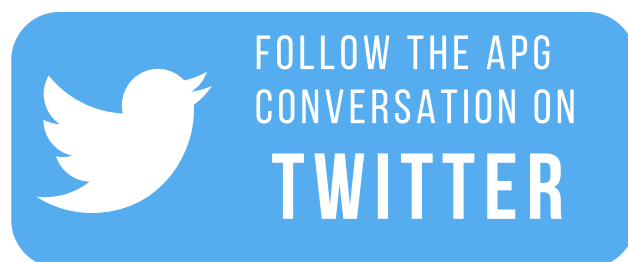
## 2.3 Member-led Annual Meeting

- October 2018 | The APG held its general meeting at the offices of Development and Peace in Montreal, where **35** members from **25** organizations attended. Over 2 days, members engaged in strategic discussions with presentations on Leadership changes in Latin America focusing on México, Colombia, and Brazil. The APG subgroups on Colombia, Mesoamerica and Haiti also gathered on determined how to best advance our advocacy priorities in the region and in Canada. Several country-focused teleconferences were held following the meeting, lead by the APG subgroups co-conveners. *[Read more here.](#)*



## 2.4 Academic collaborations & learning activities

- October 2018 | Held a lunch and learn event, in collaboration with the CCIC-CASID Next Generation program and Oxfam–Québec on the critical importance on how to support youth activism and movements to Fight Inequalities. Guest speakers included **Ode Lunardi**, civic engagement advisor, and **Elena Mejia**, Peruvian feminist activist, who were both involved in the launch of Actúa. pe, a digital platform that connects independent journalists, youth initiatives, and civil society in **Peru**.



#CCICAmericas  
#CCCIAmérique

### 3. APG MEMBERS 2018 – 2019

#### The APG has 29 members

Amnesty International Canada  
Avocats sans frontières Canada (ASFC)  
Canadian Centre for International Justice (CCIJ)  
Canadian Labour Congress - CLC  
Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW)  
Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)  
Centre for Research of Latin America and the Caribbean (CERLAC)  
Christian Peacemaker Teams  
CoDevelopment Canada  
Comité pour les droits humains en Amérique latine (CDHAL)

Cuso International  
Development and Peace  
Horizons of Friendship  
Humanité & Inclusion  
Inter Pares  
KAIROS Canada  
Maritimes-Guatemala Breaking the Silence Network (BTS/ ARSN)  
MiningWatch  
Nobel Women's Initiative  
Oxfam Canada  
Oxfam Québec  
Peace Bridges International - PBI Canada  
Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWS&D)  
Projet Accompagnement Québec-Guatemala (PAQG)  
Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC)  
Steelworkers Humanity Fund  
UNIFOR  
United Church of Canada  
USC Canada

## 4. APG STEERING COMMITTEE

### **Co-Chairs**

Rachel Vincent (Nobel Women's Initiative)

Steve Stewart (CoDevelopment Canada)

### **Treasurer**

Denis Lemelin (Canadian Union of Postal Workers)

### **Members at large**

Laura Ramirez (Steelworkers Humanity Fund)



## 5. RWG TEAM

### Staff

Sebastián Vielmas  
Regional Working Groups Officer

Laura Avalos  
Regional Working Groups Program Assistant

### Volunteers

Ben Powless, Emilie Sing and Sonja Mahallet

### Interns

Luanda Lima (Experica 2.0 program) and  
Natalia Gonçalves (Michaëlle Jean Centre for  
Global and Community Engagement, University of  
Ottawa)



## 20

## 6. FINANCES

## BUDGET 2018-2019 &amp; ACTUALS

INCOME	ACTUALS 2016-2017	ACTUALS 2017-2018	APPROVED 2018-2019	ACTUALS 03.31.2019
Membership contributions WGs	31,976.67	31,806.67	32,500.00	32,466.00
CCIC contribution	-	-	500.00	500.00
IDRC-CRDI contribution	-	6,415.00	6,607.00	5,094.56
Registration fee	2,180.00	2,910.00	2,750.00	1,925.00
Special contributions (e.g. special events, travel guest speaker, interpretation)	1,733.32	6,606.49	1,000.00	416.63
CCIC contribution in Kind (Rent)	-	-	1,640.00	1,640.00
Carry forward WGs	33,539.87	15,346.35	4,157.47	4,157.42
<b>Total income</b>	<b>\$69,429.86</b>	<b>\$63,084.51</b>	<b>\$49,154.47</b>	<b>\$46,199.61</b>

# 21

<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>ACTUALS 2016-2017</b>	<b>ACTUALS 2017-2018</b>	<b>APPROVED 2018-2019</b>	<b>ACTUALS 03.31.2019</b>
Salary and benefits (RWG Officer and RWG Assistant)	45,560.62	47,340.35	41,501.00	35,962.83
Consultant 1	1,208.10	151.60	150.00	67.81
Postage	68.82	-	-	-
Photocopy	150.24	181.08	200.00	125.83
Supplies	232.31	23.56	50.00	47.00
Bank charges & fees	55.59	47.64	50.00	16.67
Communication (tel-fax-web)	860.63	412.50	100.00	216.75
Translation	1,124.83	241.12	500.00	67.07
Interpretation	-	4,582.74	300.00	312.48
Meeting expenses (venue rental, food)	2,306.00	4,528.39	2,000.00	1,389.31
Travel staff	1,422.06	406.51	500.00	204.74
Travel participants (guest speakers)	1,557.35	-	1,000.00	-
Travel participantes (regional reps)	1,000.00	983.49	1,000.00	1,000.00
Rent	-	-	1,640.00	1,640.00
Other expenses	-	28.06	100.00	-
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$55,564.55</b>	<b>\$58,927.04</b>	<b>\$49,091.00</b>	<b>\$41,050.49</b>
<b>Deferred revenue to next fiscal year (surplus/deficit)</b>	<b>\$13,865.31</b>	<b>\$4,157.47</b>	<b>\$63.47</b>	<b>\$5,149.12</b>