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uniforum



Actor, activist, and honorary Unifor member Danny Glover shares a message of international solidarity at Canadian Council asking delegates to engage decisively and in solidarity to establish lasting peace, justice and solidarity for a better world

Canadian Council a success

Delegates to Unifor's Canadian Council left Winnipeg with the resolve to push back against the rise of the right and tools in place to build a better world.

"Our union has been the antidote to the cynical conservative politics that hurt Canada for over a decade," National President Jerry Dias said.

The Council took place one week after violent protests by fascists and other white supremacists in Virginia, putting the rise of the right top of mind for many in attendance.

"We must reach across cultural, geographical, racial differences to seek sustainable freedom and justice in the world," actor and human rights activist Danny Glover said in his address to council.

Unifor Research Director Bill Murnighan said it's up to unions to lead the fight against right-wing

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Regional Directors praise progressive policy gains

During their respective reports, Unifor's three regional directors laid out the work done nationwide to build the union and shift the politics of the country. Member mobilization in

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Unifor campaign calls for People's Trade agenda

Unifor's most ambitious campaign yet – to change the way Canada approaches and negotiates international trade deals – is now underway after the project was endorsed at Canadian Council.

"Free trade agreements have been a gift to corporations," National President Jerry Dias told Canadian Council. "They've

been a thorn in our side for nearly 30 years."

Dias arrived at Canadian Council from Washington, where he was on hand to offer advice to Canadian negotiators during the first round of talks on a renewed North America Free Trade Agreement.

"NAFTA doesn't need a twist and a tweak. It needs to be totally rebuilt. We

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New Magazine launched

Unifor launched a new quarterly magazine at Canadian Council, giving expanded coverage to the top issues and campaigns driving Unifor's activities, as well as more regional news and reports from the union's national departments.

The magazine, named Uniforum and soon to replace this newsletter, was included in delegate kits, and will be mailed to all subscribers of this newsletter in shortly.

The last newsletter comes out September 14. Subscribe to this free magazine by providing your mailing address online at unifor.org/subscribe

The magazine allows for more in-depth reporting on stories of interest to members. The magazine will come out every three months in fall, winter, spring and summer. For day-to-day coverage of Unifor's activities, go to unifor.org/news.



Uniforum is published every two weeks by Unifor, Canada's largest union in the private sector.

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Canadian Council resolutions

Delegates to the 2017 Canadian Council met to discuss and debate resolutions and several recommendations from the National President. The following motions were adopted at the meeting: National President's [Recommendations](#)

- Equity
- Human Rights
- Pharmacare

[Resolutions](#)

- 1 - The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Awareness
- 2 - Orange Shirt
- 5 - Palestinian Self-Determination and the Movement for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions
- 6 - Women and Persons with Disabilities being left behind on CPP Expansion
- 7 - Women and Persons

with Disabilities being left behind on CPP Expansion

- 8 - Safe Access to Reproductive Health Care Services

- 9 - Safe Access to Reproductive Health Care Services

- 10 - Inclusive Practices Toolkit at all Unifor Events

- 11 - Assign an Accessibility Coordinator to all Unifor Events

- 12 - Gender Pay Equity

- 19 - Young Worker Education Package

A jam-packed agenda meant that several resolutions and recommendations did not get to the floor to be discussed by delegates. All motions not dealt with by the council are referred to the National Executive Board with the recommendation of the resolutions committee.

[Recommendations](#) that were referred are:

- Green Jobs and Sustainable Development
- Technology, Automation and the Future of Work

[Resolutions](#) referred:

- 3 - GM asrTrust
 - 4 - Establishment of Equity Positions on Unifor Local Executive Boards
 - 13 - Alberta Labour Code and Organizing
 - 14 - Driverless Vehicles
 - 15 - Softwood Lumber Fair Trade
 - 16 - Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River
 - 17 - Disparity of Treatment
 - 18 - Stop Outsourcing Jobs in Hospitality
 - 20 - Language Barriers
- All recommendations and resolutions are online at unifor.org/canadiancouncil

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provincial politics took the spotlight.

"The fact that the BC election came down to a razor-thin margin really underscores the point that the political action of our union does affect real change," said Joie Warnock, Western Regional Director.

In both BC and Nova Scotia, the activism of the membership made clear differences in election issues and results at the ballot boxes, humbling two right-wing Liberal governments.

"The premier of Nova Scotia thought that seven pieces of anti-worker legislation, slashed nursing home budgets and an attempt to demonize unionized workers would



All three Regional Directors delivered a report on the activism and political action that continues to make a difference. Watch their speeches at [Youtube.com/UniforCanada](https://www.youtube.com/UniforCanada)

crush our fighting spirit," said Lana Payne, Atlantic Regional Director. "Instead, he gave us dozens more reasons to mobilize, to organize and stand up for our union and our rights."

In Ontario, a coordinated push to advance the rights of all workers is resulting in progressive changes to the Ontario labour laws.

"These changes come as the result of labour's blood, sweat and tears - following years of organizing, rallying and lobbying," said Naureen Rizvi, Ontario Regional Director.

She outlined the work that remains to be done, but Unifor members are engaged and ready to see these changes through.

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populism.

"If someone is going to stop the populist trend in Canada and elsewhere, the labor movement must lead it," Murnighan said.

Canadian Labour Congress President Hassan Yussuff echoed that message.

"We will stand up, and we will not tolerate fascism in our country," Yussuff said.

The packed agenda, under the theme Solidarity for a Better World, included several recommendations for making Canada and the world a more equitable place for working people and their communities, while addressing the

urgent needs of equity seeking groups and the environment.

A signature effort launched at the Council was an ambitious new trade campaign, People's Trade: A New Agenda for Trade Agreements. The campaign will seek to change the way trade deals are negotiated, to put working people and their committees first.

Council of Canadians Honorary Chairperson Maude Barlow reminded delegates that millions do not have access to affordable medicines, putting their health at risk. Delegates voted unanimously to support a campaign to push for a pharmacare program in Canada.



Canadian Council concluded with a message from National Secretary-Treasurer Bob Orr to continue the hard work needed to build a more equitable society for all

Bob Orr, Secretary-Treasurer, chaired the Council and reminded members that at a time when hateful and discriminatory messages are dominating the political discourse, actions are more important than ever. Delegates committed Unifor to initiate a national

dialogue on racism and Islamophobia, including convening a national, multi-stakeholder, round-table before the 2018 Council.

"Thank you for an inspiring Council. Activism matters, and we are Unifor," Orr said as he closed the meeting.

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need a deal that is designed to help workers, not harm them," Dias said. "And if this new NAFTA doesn't cut it, let's walk away."

Delegates unanimously voted to launch the People's Trade: A New Agenda for Trade Agreements campaign, and play an active role in the ongoing NAFTA and softwood lumber talks, and to initiate a debate across Canada to focus Canada's trade efforts on working people and their communities.

"Trade policy in the age of Trump seems to be based on signing more deals," Angelo DiCaro, Unifor Representative, Research told delegates.

As part of the campaign, Unifor will be active on NAFTA, softwood lumber, the Comprehensive

Economic and Trade Agreement between Canada and Europe, efforts to revive the Trans-Pacific Partnership, trade with South Korea and the possibility of a trade deal with China.

"It is time to dictate to the Canadian government what we want to see in these trade deals," said Hugues Perreault, President of Local 6001 in Montreal and a member of the working group coordinating the campaign.

For info on the campaign: unifor.org/peoplestrade and unifor.org/NAFTA.



Unifor advises Canadian NAFTA negotiators

Unifor is a key advisor as the long awaited talks to renegotiate a new North American Free Trade Agreement are underway.

D.C. to continue meetings with lead negotiator Steve Verheul and other members of the Canadian NAFTA team.



Jerry Dias meets with lead NAFTA negotiator Steve Verheul

"Our union represents members in every key economic sector, and it was these workers who paid the price for the last NAFTA accord," said National President Jerry Dias.

After attending the opening of Canadian Council, which coincided with the negotiations, Dias returned to Washington

"The dedication, energy and passion of our members at Canadian Council inspired me as I went back to the work of making sure that Canada gets a fair deal for workers."

Unifor will continue to play a key role in future rounds, scheduled to take place in Mexico and Canada in September.



IN THIS ISSUE Canadian Council delegates stand in solidarity for a better world. Regional Directors applaud progressive policy victories across the country. New People's Trade campaign announced as Unifor provides advice to Canadian NAFTA negotiators during round one of talks. Canadian Council photo insert and more...

Unifor members put equity first

Unifor has a long history of fighting for justice, and against oppression. Members committed to continue the fight at Canadian Council.

The year long ambitious Equity Audit surveyed local unions to get to know the membership better. Members Kesang Kashi and Christine MacIn carried out interviews with nearly 470 local unions, representing 80 per cent of Unifor's more than 310,000 members.

Unifor National President Jerry Dias addressed members before the presentation of the Equity Audit. "We focus on equity because it's about fairness and justice. That's

what unions were built to tackle, in bargaining and in politics."

The data collected found large gaps in representation for workers of colour, for Indigenous workers, for workers with disabilities, for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) workers and for young workers. On local executive committees, at the bargaining table, and as stewards, equity seeking groups are consistently left behind.

At Canadian Council, delegates voted to take the next step to better represent these members. Unifor will establish an Equity Advisory Panel to



Representatives from Unifor's Equity Committees pose with Deb Tveit, Mohamad Alsadi and Kaylie Tiessen

build on the findings of the audit and begin the work to close the gaps. Deb Tveit, Assistant to the National President, connected these internal improvements to the political action of the union, saying, "Unifor was built to change this country, and we can't do it unless we push for equity."

Additional resolutions

were adopted to help improve Unifor's equity work. These include: improving accessibility at events, combating the gender pay gap, better supporting young workers, and many more.

Read the resolutions at unifor.org/canadiancouncil.