



MEDIA RELEASE

Health professionals around the world call for end of coal power

TORONTO (May 18, 2016) – More than 300,000 doctors, nurses, public health professionals and public health advocates represented by 82 organizations from 30 countries have released a **Global Health Statement on Coal Plants** today, in anticipation of next week's G7 summit. The statement calls on the G7 leaders to discuss the phase-out of coal plants as a key health issue when they meet on May 26 and 27. In Canada, 12 organizations have signed the statement including the **Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA)**, the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada, the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO), the Canadian Lung Association and the **Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE)**.

"The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared that "climate change is the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century," said Dr. Courtney Howard, emergency room physician in Yellowknife and Board Member of **CAPE**. "The WHO estimates that climate change will claim the lives of 250,000 people each year by 2030 unless we take dramatic steps to reduce emissions today."

Canada can be a global leader on this issue, building on momentum from the provinces. Ontario no longer burns coal for electricity and Alberta intends to follow suit by 2030. Accelerating the transition away from coal creates immediate health benefits: the avoided health impacts from Ontario's phase-out alone are valued at approximately \$3 billion per year.

"We want our leaders to understand that they can produce significant air pollution health benefits in their home countries by phasing out coal plants," said Ian Culbert, Executive Director of the **CPHA**. "The air pollution from coal plants has been clearly linked to increases in heart disease, strokes, lung diseases including lung cancer, and asthma symptoms."

"Ontario's six coal plants produced approximately 600 premature deaths and 900 hospital admissions each year back in 2005" said Kim Perrotta, Executive Director **CAPE**. "With their phase-out, levels of air pollution in Ontario have declined dramatically along with air pollution-related health impacts."

"In Alberta, the phase-out of 18 coal-fired generators is expected to produce health benefits worth about \$300 million per year," offered Dr. Joe Vipond, emergency room physician in Calgary and **CAPE** member. "Imagine what we could achieve if we phased out the 16 coal-fired generators in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Saskatchewan as well".

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A copy of the Global Health Statement on Coal Plants is available here: <https://cape.ca/global-health-statement-on-coal-plants/>

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