

# Doing Justice Being Peace

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Weekly Newsletter



**Protecting the environment is essential to preserving peace**

**- António Guterres (United Nations Secretary-General)**

## HOW DOES **WAR** DAMAGE THE **ENVIRONMENT?**

Warfare damages ecosystems and vital resources like farmland and water. “Scorched earth” tactics and leftover explosives create a toxic legacy for future generations. Repeated conflicts over assets such as timber, diamonds, gold, and oil perpetuate a cycle where environmental degradation escalates hostility and obstructs peace. As extreme weather becomes more common, the likelihood of armed conflicts increases in regions vulnerable to water scarcity, desertification, floods, and drought.

November 6<sup>th</sup> is the *United Nations International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict*.



Is the burden of environmental harm shared equally? In Canada, Indigenous and Black communities have historically faced domination, dispossession, and exploitation, leading to the erasure of their geographies and cultures.

These communities are disproportionately subjected to environmental hazards, including mining operations, toxic waste dumps, petrochemical plants, landfills, and pipelines.

This systemic inequality, known as environmental racism, is intensified by a “throwaway culture” that treats objects, people, and places as expendable, to be thrown away for economic gain.

The “not in my backyard” mentality further illustrates how privileged groups divert harmful projects to marginalized areas, often without considering the long-term harms or impacts.

Bill C-226 aims to address these injustices by examining links between racialization, socio-economic status, and environmental risks. To support this bill, visit: [kairoscanada.org](http://kairoscanada.org)



*Love recognizes no barriers. It jumps hurdles, leaps fences, penetrates walls to arrive at its destination full of hope. – Maya Angelou*

When you encounter the idea “not in my backyard,” how can this be shifted to a collective “we’re all in this together” approach?

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