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12 July 2021

Dear Mayor Tory and Toronto City Councilors:

I am writing this letter to urge City Council to endorse the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty (Member Motion MM35.29) on Wednesday (July 14th). This treaty calls for an ending of the expansion of coal, oil and natural gas production, an orderly and rapid phase out of existing production, and a just transition to renewable energy.

Canada and many other countries in the world have promised to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 – less than 30 years from now. To achieve this goal, there can be no new fossil fuel infrastructure built of any sort, and yet both the Canadian government (through its purchase and expansion of the TMX pipeline and its support of liquified natural gas exports) and the Ontario government (through its drive to increase natural gas supply to homes and natural gas generation of electricity) are doing just that.

Toronto's endorsement of the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty would thus send a clear message to both levels of government, and would continue Toronto's fine tradition of acting pro-actively to fight global warming going back already several decades (beginning with the Toronto Atmospheric Fund and Energy Efficiency Office in the early 1990s) and continuing through to the present (through the TransformTo plan and other measures). The recent shocking heat waves in western Canada, the western US, and elsewhere underline the urgency of rapid measures to phase out our use of fossil fuels.

Yours truly,

Danny Harvey, Professor,
Deputy Editor (Climatic Change),
IPCC Lead Author (4th and 5th Assessment Reports),
Co-Chair, City of Toronto Special Advisory Committee on the Environment (1989-1995)