

From the Voices.Voix website: "Since 2006 the Government of Canada has systematically undermined democratic institutions and practices, and has eroded the protection of free speech, and other fundamental human rights. It has deliberately set out to silence the voices of organizations or individuals who raise concerns about government policies or disagree with government positions. "

Read and sign the full declaration.4281 signatures so far.

Contact the Voices-Voix coalition
coordination@voices-voix.ca
communications@voices-voix.ca
legal@voices-voix.ca

Organizations that wish to endorse this Declaration should send an email to communications@voices-voix.ca.

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Subject: Action Plan: A DAY FOR DEMOCRACY!
From: Voices-Voix Communications <communications@voices-voix.ca>
To: communications@voices-voix.ca

Dear Representatives of Voices-Voix member-organizations,

Apologies to those of you who receive this email twice, as many of you are on the Voices-Voix list-serv. I need to make sure you get it as it is a call to action. Please read it carefully, click on the links as indicated, and don't hesitate to get in touch with me directly if you have any questions or ideas: 514 982 6606 x2294.

Darren

Dear Voices,

There have been numerous suggestions going over this list-serv about what actions we should next take as a coalition, especially with an election possibly around the corner. I have also talked and corresponded with a number of you individually about options for action.

The ideas that seem to get the best responses are:

- a) find a way to make new demands, so we don't just have those on our Declaration from last June; and
- b) take concrete action during the election season to highlight the loss of democratic space in Canada.

So here's a plan for action I've managed to work out over the last week or 2 with a number of you, which hopefully makes good on those ideas...

Action Plan: A DAY FOR DEMOCRACY! (D4D)

1. In early April, we hold a nation-wide Day for Democracy in several, if not many, Canadian cities and towns. We focus on town-hall meetings and other events that allow Canadians to raise their voices and share ideas for how we can take our democracy back, and ensure our right to free speech and transparency in government. This will be a chance for us to discuss all of the ideas we've been sharing amongst one another with Canadians at large, and invite the media to carry the discussion forward. (A date has been suggested: Wednesday, April 6th.)

2. A week or few days before our D4D, we hold a press conference, or several simultaneous press conferences, to officially announce the D4D. At that point we also announce new demands to ALL the political parties (since we are non-partisan, and there is no guarantee that the next government will respect our rights, no matter the party or parties in power). We announce that we will be discussing these issues and many more at our D4D, and are inviting Canadians of all political persuasions to come and join the discussion on how we reclaim our democratic rights and democratic space.

This plan allows our smaller member-organizations to get involved in their local cities and towns and within their means. Organizations that would want to team up and hold events together can obviously do so. Several of you who I've spoken to have said you can organize something in your city, or another city, and at least be present to animate and coordinate town-hall meetings of some kind. We can even hold these events in swing ridings (i.e. these: <http://catch22campaign.ca/notes> <<http://catch22campaign.ca/notes>>) in order to put pressure on the parties to address democracy, free speech and transparency, instead of whatever else they were planning to focus on.

We can encourage our sister coalition in Québec, Pas de démocratie sans voix! to take action on this day as well, and even hold their own press conference on the day of ours, or together with us, or both.

I can quickly create a Facebook event for the Day for Democracy which, if many of our organizations promote it, can spread quite widely by early April, and we can add new information about new organizations/events/cities that get involved as new organizations and people get onboard. We can also create announcements on the websites of our various organizations which carry this information and link them to the Facebook event. As soon as the new Voices-Voix website is up, we can put it there too (it should be up in a couple of weeks). If any of you have suggestions for other ways to collectively promote such an event, please EMAIL ME DIRECTLY so we don't clog up people's inboxes (but remember: any suggestion that involves my time but not yours will probably not fly very far - we'll have to ALL spread the word as best we can).

Suggested pledges to put to all political parties:

With help from some of you, I have made a 2-page draft of a letter that we can send to all the political parties, outlining pledges we want them to make before the next election. We can send this to the parties within the next week, if you like the way it looks, or wait for a key moment. And then we can make them public, as well as the responses we get (or don't get) public at our press conference(s). The pledges outlined are short and vague enough that the parties can, in theory, agree to them. (If we put too many pledges or make them too detailed, each loses impact, and becomes less intelligible to journalists.) Here is a link to see the letter:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qqmZsauMw0qoHCQkCK-TggNU5dxgjJ6FTXDSCRG-ZAs/edit?hl=en&authkey=CMm11rsF>
<<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qqmZsauMw0qoHCQkCK-TggNU5dxgjJ6FTXDSCRG-ZAs/edit?hl=en&authkey=CMm11rsF>>

If you have suggestions for it, please email me DIRECTLY at darren@alternatives.ca or at communications@voices-voix.ca <<mailto:communications@voices-voix.ca>> , so we don't clog up people's inboxes.

Suggested topics for discussion at our events on the Day for Democracy:

From your emails and our chats, I have compiled a list of suggestions on how to act together to restore democracy and free speech in Canada. These, as well as the pledges we ask from the parties, can serve as discussion points during town hall meetings and other events that we hold on the Day for Democracy. Here is a link to the list:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kc8219CwSAev25ci4mSj-dVfvhFxoTvbN6Yj4iS8x40/edit?hl=en&authkey=CMHx7NML#>

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kc8219CwSAev25ci4mSj-dVfvhFxoTvbN6Yj4iS8x40/edit?hl=en&authkey=CMHx7NML#>>

If there is anything you want to add, just go ahead and add it directly on the document.

Suggested documents to have on-hand during the Day for Democracy:

I can create and send you all documents to use on the D4D - documents to print and bring along so as to coordinate discussion at the town hall meetings and other events. (If the new website's up in a couple of weeks as it should be, we'll put them there for download too.) I have put down a few suggestions for documents to create here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OdG3OVcbjN9Lo4pkYy1KVdj9fkkmGutK4HApunXlWmE/edit?hl=en&authkey=CJKWvKgD#>>

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1OdG3OVcbjN9Lo4pkYy1KVdj9fkkmGutK4HApunXlWmE/edit?hl=en&authkey=CJKWvKgD#>>

If you have other ideas, simply add them to the list, and volunteer to create the documents themselves. (You can also send them to me once they're mostly done and I'll add the logo, and clean them up etc.)

WHO'S IN?

Is your organization willing to participate in a Day for Democracy by organizing or coordinating, or helping out with, a town-hall meeting or other event? If your organization can participate, just click on the link below and indicate, as with the example shown: the name of your organization (or simply your name); whether you can do the Day for Democracy on Wednesday, April 6th; in which city you would like to help organize and/or coordinate an event; and a contact person with email and tel# so people in the same cities or regions can work together if possible.

https://spreadsheets.google.com/ccc?hl=en&hl=en&key=tX_nx_HsNxdHh6p0B8Gs4mQ&authkey=CPbZ05AC#gid=0

https://spreadsheets.google.com/ccc?hl=en&hl=en&key=tX_nx_HsNxdHh6p0B8Gs4mQ&authkey=CPbZ05AC#gid=0

(Again, just click on this link and fill in your organization's info to indicate that you would like to somehow participate.)

In a few days, judging by the number of organizations we see on this last link above (under "who's in"), we should know whether this is a plan we can pull off. I'd say all we need are events in 4 or 5 cities to know we can get started, and as we organize our events and build momentum, others will organize events or join on to those already going. And once these things get going they can really roll, as we've seen with the momentum built on the courage and honour of the good people in the Arab world - their insistence on acting together in unity, refusing to be silenced, and demanding their basic rights. Hopefully we can be inspired by that, and take a good step

towards building momentum here too - getting people out, working together,
raising our voices, and taking our democracy back...

Darren

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