



We, members of the London community and local civil society groups, are reaching out to you, our Governmental Representative:

After the escalations between Israeli forces and Palestinian civilians over the threats of unethical displacement, and further escalations in Al-Aqsa mosque during the final days of Ramadan, which are amongst the holiest days in Islam, Israeli forces capitalized on such events to further aggravate Palestinians. Doing so by attacking unarmed Palestinian civilians with rubber bullets, skunk water, and stun grenades. Consequently, Gaza has endured the worst of these attacks, countless air strikes were called onto Gaza, killing 220 Palestinians, including at least 59 children and 35 women, with over 6,039 injured, as of May 17, and as a direct result of the unwarranted aggression on this open-air prison.

Israel, the Occupying Power, is currently the only country in breach of over thirty (30) UN Security Council resolutions, violations that have had no repercussions and are yet to be remedied. The notion that there is a bias against Israel at the UN, is not only wrong, but it is dangerous and cynical. Israel continues to be called out for their constant disregard for international law, yet, it has taken every step to avoid abiding by international law and the relevant UN resolutions. Accountability should not be equated with bias, nor should accountability be ignored for the sake of allyship or geo-strategic interests. Throughout its years of multilateralism, Canada has always stood for justice, accountability, and peace - why are the Palestinian people an exception to those practices of diplomacy and foreign affairs?

Notably, one of the greatest violations of international law, perpetrated by Israel, is the blockade on the Gaza Strip, which has endured for over 14 years a regime of land, sea and air closure, which has kept its inhabitants on the brink of humanitarian disaster. There is broad consensus amongst human rights organizations like Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the International Committee of the Red Cross as well as UN offices such as the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and United Nations Relief and Works

Agency (UNRWA) that this siege is illegal. Furthermore, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, has stated that this siege “is illegal and should be lifted.” And most recently, Israel targeted a building housing major media outlet present in Gaza (Associated Press and Al-Jazeera) which constitutes a war crime.

A severe culture of impunity by the international community has fostered the right conditions for Israel to wipe families out of existence with terrorizing airstrikes, forcibly displace families in acts of ethnic cleansing, attack worshippers in the third holiest site in Islam, attack medics and journalists, and destroy countless civilian infrastructure, medical offices, and media headquarters without a remnant of guilt or shame. International law, and the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, are clear: an occupying power has the utmost responsibility to protect the population it occupies. Israel, as an occupying power, has ignored its responsibility to uphold international law and implement the relevant UN resolutions, including Security Council Resolution 1265, which Canada voted for during its last term on the Security Council, which formed the basis for the topic of protection of civilians in armed conflict. By turning a blind eye to continuous violations of international law by Israel, Canada has become inadvertently complicit in the suffering and plight of the Palestinian people.

Canada’s long-standing approach of being friends with Israel does not mean that it cannot call out its allies when they make a mockery of our rules-based international order. We agree, dialogue is the way forward. However, as we have recently just commemorated 73 years of the Palestinian Nakba, we are reminded once again that the Palestinian plight is ongoing as more and more Palestinian families are forcibly displaced. The relationship between the Palestinians and the Israelis, especially when it comes to direct negotiations, is that of the prisoner and the jailor – one side has nothing left to compromise on, while the other has all the power and ability to compromise, but it willingly does not. Yet, when other avenues are sought in order to bring about peace, security, and dignity for the Palestinian people, they are instructed to revert back to the same oppressive power relation that is present between them and the Occupying Power. The calls for boycotts and sanctions had, and will continue to have, one specific main goal: to bring about peace for both, the Palestinian and Israeli people. It is high time for Canada to take the steps necessary to create the right conditions to create peace in the region.

In this regard, we call upon you, our representatives and officials, to take the necessary steps to preserve the fundamental human rights of the Palestinian people, and end the bloodshed caused by Israel’s unwillingness to abide by the most basic doctrines of International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law.

Firstly, we call upon you to move away from “neutral” sounding statements of condemnation and call the injustice facing the Palestinian people for what it is. This is a matter of injustice.

Neutrality in cases of oppression and injustice is complicity with the oppressor. Siding with the oppressed requires courage, morality, and a principled approach.

Secondly, we implore you to end the military support, whether logistically or financially, to Israel as it continues to violate every possible doctrine in international law and the most basic of military rules of engagement. Canadian taxpayers' money should not be directed towards the active ethnic cleansing campaigns and the targeted killing of civilians perpetrated by Israel, the Occupying Power. Over \$13.7 Million can be redirected from sending military goods and technology to Israel and reallocated towards funding programs that support human rights in the region.

Thirdly, we urge you to embrace non-violent means of resistance such as the BDS movement. Despite efforts to paint such movements as sinister, their only aim is to end the culture of impunity, hold Israel accountable, and create the necessary environment to engage in dialogue. The BDS movement works towards creating pressure for Israel to cease its illegal settlement construction throughout the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem.

Fourthly, Canada cannot continue to claim to support a two-state solution in theory while shying away from accepting, and actively endorsing, a contiguous and viable Palestinian state, based on the pre-June 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital - in accordance with the Quartet Roadmap, the Arab Peace Initiative, Land for Peace (UNSC Resolution 242), and the Madrid Principles. We ask of you to take a new and principled approach that will preserve the two-State solution and reject, without any hesitation, any unilateral efforts aiming to create a one-state apartheid.

We believe that human rights should be defended regardless of the oppressed side's heritage, religion, race and location. Canada claims to be proud of its diversity but yet fails to defend the heritage of its inhabitants or defend international human rights violations. More precisely, the crimes committed by the occupying power that is Israel. We urge that you cease the aid of these heinous acts by weaponizing the oppressive state of Israel and we further urge that you cease the silencing of those raising awareness for said atrocities. There is no possible ethical, political, or monetary justification for murdering children or the countless other acts committed on the Palestinian population. It is time to utilize the privilege and influence of this country for the greater good, it is time to make an impact and taking a strong stance to initiate a movement to defend the oppressed, and it is time to terminate unethical transactions and relationships with countries guilty of war crimes.