



October 14, 2023

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A2

The Honourable Mélanie Joly
Minister of Foreign Affairs

The Honourable Ahmed Hussen
Minister of International Development

Honourable Prime Minister Justin Trudeau,

In light of the recent developments in the Middle East, we, the undersigned organizations and individuals from Muslim communities across Canada, are writing to express our deep concerns about our government's stance and state our expectations regarding its position.

The death toll in Gaza continues to rise, and is expected to become worse in the coming days. The situation in Palestine deeply affects our community. Numerous Canadian Muslim families have seen their loved ones suffer, with some killed or injured, homes destroyed, and living under dire conditions without water, electricity, or fuel. Additionally, some community members visiting Gaza have been stranded and cannot return to Canada. For us, Palestine is deeply intertwined with our faith; it is not just about land but about a blessed land that houses Al-Aqsa Mosque, one of our holiest sites. Our advocacy for Palestinian rights after 75 years of occupation and oppression is rooted in our faith's commitment to justice and the inherent rights of the Palestinian people to their homeland, to live with dignity, and to resist occupation.

Your response to the conflict lacked a balanced perspective and overlooked the historical backdrop of the prolonged occupation, subjugation of the Palestinian people and the continued violations of UN resolutions. Your stance appeared one-sided, not adequately representing the



sentiments of numerous Canadians. It is concerning that your political backing for the expansionist Israeli government has taken precedence, thereby endorsing its unrestrained actions.

Equally troubling is your suggestion that Canadian demonstrations supporting the rights of Palestinians have supported terrorism. Such assumptions feed into the narrative of the ultra right zealots and expose Muslims to harassment and to potential attacks. They also stifle genuine discourse and impede individuals' basic rights to voice their political beliefs. Your stance, and that of other elected officials, has potentially empowered institutions like corporations and universities to fire or penalize those advocating for Palestinian rights. We assert our right to our political stances and the freedom to articulate them, even if they diverge from the government's views.

Our expectations of you and the Canadian government are clear. Canada has long been recognized on the international stage as a promoter of peace and an upholder of international law. This stance has won Lester Pearson a Nobel Peace Prize. In conflicts such as these, Canada should:

1. Prioritize de-escalation, mediation and peace-building.
2. Firmly condemn any Israeli actions that breach international law. Demand that Israel refrains from targeting civilians and destroying homes.
3. Utilize Canada's diplomatic relationships to end the unlawful blockade of Gaza, ensuring that 2.2 million people have access to essentials like water, food, and fuel.
4. Advocate for Israel to allow immediate humanitarian assistance to enter Gaza.
5. Expedite the safe return of Palestinian Canadians currently facing dire circumstances in Gaza.
6. Speak against the Israeli government's attempts to forcibly displace 1.1 million civilians out of Gaza with nowhere to go - in violation to international law.

In conclusion, we urge a reconsideration of the government's approach, one that prioritizes impartiality, humanitarian assistance, and the values of justice and peace. The unique position of Canada in international diplomacy could be the catalyst for meaningful change, and we urge you to harness that for the sake of both Canadian citizens affected by the conflict and for the



Palestinian people who have endured decades of hardship. We trust in your leadership to align Canada's response with the core values that our great nation has always championed.

Sincerely,

Canadian Muslim Public Affairs Council

Al-Salam Centre

Atlantic Canada Palestinian Society

Canadian Institute of Islamic Civilization

Canadian Muslim Research Think Tank

Centre Communautaire Laurentian

Centre Communautaire de Quebec

Centre Communautaire Villeray

Hespeler Masjid

Islamic Centre Cold Lake

Islamic Centre Edmonton

Islamic Centre Hyde Park

Islamic Centre London

Islamic Centre of Markham

Islamic Centre of Ottawa

Islamic Centre Vancouver

Islamic Centre Verdun

Islamic Centre Waterloo

Islamic Centre Westmount

Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA)

Islamic Community Centre Brossard

Islamic Community Centre Ontario

Islamic Society of Kingston

Justice For All

Just Peace Advocates

Kitchener Masjid

MacEwan Muslim Students' Organization

Masjid Aisha

Masjid Toronto



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COUNCIL

Muslim Association of Canada (MAC)
Muslim Food Bank & Community Services
Qurtuba Islamic Centre
Rose City Islamic Centre
Rohingya Association of Canada
Sarnia Muslim Association
Siraj Institute
Think For Actions