

Friday May 15, 2026

The Honourable Gary Anandasangaree

Minister of Public Safety, Government of Canada

And, **Erin O'Gorman**

President, Canada Border Services Agency

RE: Concerns Regarding the Politicization of CBSA Denying Entry to Muslim & Pro-Palestine Speakers to Canada

Dear Minister Anandasangaree and CBSA President Erin O'Gorman,

We, the undersigned community, civil society, faith based and Muslim organizations write to express serious concern regarding recent events that reflect an emerging pattern of border enforcement actions that are increasingly disconnected from legitimate public safety objectives and instead aligned with ideological screening, political pressure campaigns and the suppression of protected expression.

Ahead of the Muslim Association of Canada (MAC) Convention 2026, one of the largest Muslim community gatherings in Canada taking place this long weekend in Toronto, a growing number of invited international Muslim speakers, scholars, diplomats, and intellectuals are reportedly facing a pattern of ideological censorship, including ETA / visa denials, revocations, secondary interrogations, and harassment upon attempting to enter Canada for the convention. The apparent targeting of invited Muslim speakers and intellectuals attending a major Canadian Muslim convention raises profound concerns regarding the misuse of immigration and border authorities as mechanisms to suppress lawful speech, religious engagement, and political expression potentially due to foreign interference or lobbying interests.

The broader concern is the appearance of a discriminatory and politically selective enforcement environment in which Muslim voices, particularly those engaged in advocacy concerning Palestine and the critiquing of Israel, are subjected to disproportionate scrutiny, harassment, delays, secondary inspections, visa complications, or exclusion from border entry and public discourse in Canada altogether.

Among the incidents that have reflected this concern is the March 2026 denial of entry involving French-Palestinian Member of the European Parliament Rima Hassan, who stated publicly that she was [prevented from entering Canada](#) ahead of scheduled speaking events in Montreal and Toronto. Following the incident, B'nai Brith Canada [publicly celebrated](#) the outcome on social media, stating that it had urged Canadian authorities to deny Hassan entry because of her political positions regarding Israel and Palestine. Similar concerns have also been raised regarding visa denials and travel restrictions affecting [Palestinian athletes and delegations](#) seeking entry to Canada for international FIFA-related events.

CBSA is mandated to protect border integrity and public safety. It is not mandated to police lawful political opinion, adjudicate ideological acceptability, or act as an instrument through which external political organizations may silence critics or suppress different viewpoints.

The concern becomes even more serious where there is a reasonable perception that organized political lobbying efforts, including those tied to advocacy of foreign interests, are capable of influencing

immigration or border outcomes involving internationally recognized scholars, journalists, elected representatives, diplomats, community leaders, humanitarian advocates, artists, or intellectual figures invited by Canadian organizations, mosques, universities, and civil society institutions to engage in lawful public dialogue. Such a dynamic risks undermining public confidence in the neutrality and institutional independence of the Canadian border safety agency.

The repeated targeting, obstruction, or humiliation of such figures by the CBSA risks communicating that Muslim religious leadership and Palestinian advocacy are inherently suspect categories requiring exceptional surveillance and obstruction. This is both disrespectful and harmful to community trust and confidence in public institutions.

Canada has long distinguished itself internationally as a country committed to pluralism, civil liberties, academic freedom, religious freedom, and principled democratic engagement. That reputation is undermined when border enforcement appears increasingly entangled with ideological policing or politically motivated suppression of speech.

We therefore call on the Government of Canada, the minister of public safety and the CBSA to:

1. Launch an independent investigation into CBSA decision-making processes and any potential violations of rights, due process, and administrative fairness in recent border entry refusals, and take necessary disciplinary actions.
2. End discriminatory and inconsistent practices in border screening and admissibility decisions, and ensure that all individuals are treated fairly, consistently, and without political or ideological bias.
3. Implement corrective measures and oversight mechanisms to ensure transparency, accountability, and adherence in all enforcement and entry decisions.

Canada's borders must not become instruments for the selective policing of speech or foreign influence.

Sincerely,

Advocacy, National, Relief and Cultural Organizations

1. Canadian Muslim Public Affairs Council (CMPAC)
2. Arab Canadian Lawyers Association
3. Bel Agir
4. Canadian Muslim Healthcare Network (CMHN)
5. Hikma Public Affairs Council
6. Independent Jewish Voices
7. Islamic Relief Canada
8. ISNA Canada
9. Justice For All Canada
10. Muslim Association of Canada
11. Ontario Palestinian Rights Association
12. Palestinian and Jewish Unity - Palestiniens et Juifs unis (PAJU)
13. Palestinian Canadian Congress
14. The Canadian Palestinian Social Association (CPSA)
15. Just Peace Advocates/Mouvement Pour Une Paix Juste

16. The Canadian BDS Coalition and International BDS Allies
17. Think for Actions
18. Mission Relief
19. ICNA Canada (ICNA)
20. Palestinian Students and Scholars at Risks (PSSAR)

Islamic Centres and Mosques

21. Al-Salam Centre (Calgary)
22. Ar-Rashaad Centre (Brampton)
23. Barrhaven Islamic Centre (Ottawa)
24. Canadian Institute of Islamic Civilization (Montreal)
25. Centre Communautaire de Quebec (Quebec City)
26. Centre Communautaire Laurentien (Montreal)
27. Centre Communautaire Villeray (Montreal)
28. Centre for Islamic Knowledge (GTA)
29. Guildford Islamic Cultural Centre (Surrey)
30. Hespler Masjid (Cambridge)
31. Ibrahim Jame (Hamilton)
32. Islamic Centre – Hyde Park (London)
33. Islamic Centre – Ottawa (Ottawa)
34. Islamic Centre – Vancouver (Vancouver)
35. Islamic Centre – Verdun (Montreal)
36. Islamic Centre – Waterloo (Waterloo)
37. Islamic Centre – Westmount (London)
38. Islamic Centre (Edmonton)
39. Islamic Centre Cold Lake (Cold Lake)
40. Islamic Centre of Southwest Ontario (London)
41. Islamic Community Centre of Ontario (GTA)
42. Kitchener Masjid (Kitchener)
43. Masjid Aisha (Guelph)
44. Masjid Toronto (GTA)
45. Muslim Neighbour Nexus (GTA)
46. Noor Gardens (London)
47. Qurtuba Islamic Centre (Ottawa)
48. Rose City Islamic Centre (Windsor)
49. Tawheed Community Centre (GTA)