



January 30, 2024

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
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The Honourable Mélanie Joly
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
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Dear Prime Minister & Minister Joly,

We write to you today to request an urgent meeting to discuss our recent visit to Jordan and Palestine.

We are deeply concerned by what we witnessed on the ground during our six-day visit, during which we met with Palestinian refugees, aid workers, Canadian consular officials, and progressive Israeli activists.

The situation in the West Bank is profoundly alarming, as settler violence and Israeli forces attacks on Palestinians have massively increased in past months. Nearly 400 Palestinians were killed in the West Bank in 2023, including over 100 children. The expansion of illegal settlements is further contributing to this violence and harming chances of a peaceful resolution to the decades-long occupation.

Although we were unable to visit Gaza due to the horrendous war, we met with families whose loved ones have been killed or injured. For nearly four months, Israeli airstrikes and ground military activities in Gaza have resulted in an average daily death toll of 250 Palestinians, surpassing the daily casualties reported in other major conflicts in recent years. Over 57,000 Palestinians have been injured, with a staggering 1.9 million internally displaced, constituting 85 % of the population.

Two million people in Gaza are in danger of starvation and disease. Gaza is the most dangerous place in the world to be a child.

Days after our return from Jordan and Palestine, the International Court of Justice ordered provisional measures, requiring Canada to increase its efforts to ensure a ceasefire, the release of all hostages, provide humanitarian aid to those in need, and prevent genocide. While an investigation into the 12 former staff who allegedly committed crimes is necessary, we are profoundly alarmed that Canada has chosen to pause funding to UNRWA at this most desperate time of need. This is collective punishment of many innocent people – especially children.

Given both the potential for complicity in genocide and Canada's Arms Trade Treaty obligations, we again urge Canada to immediately halt all arms transfers to Israel.

What Palestinians need now is solidarity and action from Canada: action for a ceasefire, action for an end to the starvation, action for peace and justice for all.

We hope you will accept our urgent request for a meeting to communicate to you the seriousness of this situation and the need for Canada to change its response to this crisis, meet its international legal obligations, and protect the human rights of the most vulnerable. We look forward to sharing our first-hand experience from the ground with you both.

Sincerely,



Heather McPherson, MP
Edmonton Strathcona
NDP Critic for Foreign Affairs
NDP Critic for International
Development



Lindsay Mathyssen, MP
London – Fanshawe
NDP Critic for National Defence



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