

Brief submitted to:

The Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development (FAAE)

Study on Recent Events in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza

on September 27, 2023

by:

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## Preface

We represent four Canadian Christian denominations who work with long-standing Palestinian and Israeli partners towards a just and lasting peace. We represent millions of Canadian Christians deeply concerned for the human rights of siblings around the world, including Palestinians and Israelis.

Individually and jointly, on multiple occasions, our denominations have written to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs about the escalating violence in the region. In April 2023, we met with parliamentarians from all parties to make the same recommendations made in this brief. In January 2023, following their visit to the Holy Land in December 2022, Bishop Susan Johnson and Archbishop Linda Nicholls wrote a joint letter to the government regarding concerns they heard from church leaders in the Holy Land about the increasing fragility of the Christian presence, which is primarily Palestinian, in light of recent acts of violence against them. The response received from the Prime Minister reiterated Canada's support for a 2-state solution, despite the growing number of illegal Israeli settlements in East Jerusalem and the West Bank. Gaza remains under Israeli military control of its land and sea borders and its airspace, and over the movement of people and goods in and out of Gaza.

The increasing levels of violence, violations of human rights, Palestinian rights in particular, and of international law occur within the context of Israel's long-standing and ongoing occupation of Palestinian territories. While Canada's policy position states that it does not recognize Israel's authority over the occupied Palestinian territories, and still calls for a (now increasingly unlikely) 2-state solution, Israeli government leaders make it increasingly clear—publicly—that Israel has no intention of ending its occupation or of ever accepting the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian state living alongside the State of Israel. Recent action by the Knesset (March 2023) repealed the Disengagement Law, which effectively allows settlements in the only contiguous area of the Palestinian Territories where it would be feasible to establish a Palestinian state. Current and previous Israeli governments have openly declared either that there will never be a sovereign Palestinian State alongside the State of Israel<sup>1</sup>, and even more alarmingly, as stated by Israeli Finance Minister and illegal settler Bezalel Smotrich, declared that there is “no such thing as Palestinian people”.<sup>2</sup> It is encouraging to see that Canada condemned this particular remark<sup>3</sup>. However, it is clear that stronger action is needed from the international community: as of February 2023, Smotrich has also been given administrative authority of the occupied West Bank, over millions of the occupied Palestinians whom he claims do not exist.

The current Canadian government has condemned Palestinians' right to resist the occupation, even non-violently, using resistance tools of boycott, divestment and sanctions. This leaves Palestinians few other non-violent options. As carefully documented in reports by three highly-reputable human rights organizations, namely B'Tselem, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, there is widespread consensus in the international human rights community that the government of Israel is implementing a system of apartheid in its policies and practices, both inside Israel and in the occupied Palestinian territories (OPT). Globally, including in North America, several churches, civil society organizations, unions and academic institutions have passed resolutions, stating that the policies and practices of the Israeli government constitute a system of apartheid that systematically denies and deprives Palestinians of their rights and freedoms, as described by the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> “Netanyahu says no Palestinian state as long as he's prime minister”, Reuters, March 15 2015, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-israel-election-idUSKBN0MC1I820150316>, accessed on July 10, 2023.

<sup>2</sup> “Top Israeli Minister: ‘No such thing’ as Palestinian people”, CTV News article, <https://www.ctvnews.ca/world/top-israeli-minister-no-such-thing-as-palestinian-people-1.6321295>, accessed on July 17, 2023.

<sup>3</sup> “Ottawa condemns Israeli minister's ‘shameful’ remarks about Palestinian people, CBC, Darren Major, March 21, 2023, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/ottawa-condemns-smotrich-remarks-palestinian-people-1.6786403>, accessed on July 17, 2023.

<sup>4</sup> International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, <https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocities/>

Our denominations have stated clearly that antisemitism and Islamophobia, and all forms of ethnic- and racially-based prejudice, discrimination, and acts of racism (individual, systemic, overt, and implicit) are forms of sin. The churches acknowledge a long and painful history of antisemitism within Christianity and a history of hostility and misunderstanding between Christianity and Islam. Our denominations have called upon our members to resist antisemitism, Islamophobia, and all forms of racism and religious intolerance within our churches and in wider society. Our denominations are committed to working with co-religionists and people of good will for just peace, for the sake of the world.

We believe there is space, without being antisemitic, for legitimate critique of the current situation in Israel and Palestine that is consonant with International Law and human rights, and with the legitimate security concerns of the state of Israel. The disproportional effects of Israeli policies on Palestinian civilians, the increased violence against the Palestinian Christian community, the unacceptable toll on Palestinian children and a polarization that shows no pathway to peaceful resolution are increasingly problematic.

Even as we commend the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development for undertaking this important study on the actions Canada should take to promote and support a just and lasting resolution to the situation in Palestine and Israel, we urge the Committee not to delay in making concrete recommendations. Therefore, we call on the Government of Canada to act urgently in line with its obligations under International Law to address the ongoing violations of human rights occurring daily in Palestine and Israel, whether by Israeli or Palestinian authorities. Now is the time for Canada to take concrete, meaningful action in line with its own existing policy and with its obligations under international law.

We thank the Committee for the opportunity to submit this brief. Furthermore, we encourage the Committee to invite Canadian church partners from Palestine and Israel who live this reality every day to offer their first-hand testimony, and we offer our own testimony as witnesses before the Committee.

The following recommendations from the Canadian churches making this submission to the Committee's study are consistent with Canada's own long-standing, existing policy on Palestine and Israel, with international law, and with all relevant United Nations Resolutions.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1. Canada should adjust its voting in the UN General Assembly so as to bring it in line with its own official policy on Israel-Palestine, with international law and all relevant United Nations Resolutions.**
- a. We thank the Canadian Government for its vote in support of the UN General Assembly affirmation on the Right of the Palestinian people to self-determination on December 16, 2021. We support the recommendations made by Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) in this regard that Canada should continue in this positive step by supporting resolutions which: i) condemn illegal Israeli settlements; ii) support the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the occupied Palestinian territory, and; iii) oppose the illegal annexation of Jerusalem.
- b. Specifically, Canada should begin by:

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[crimes/Doc.10\\_International%20Convention%20on%20the%20Suppression%20and%20Punishment%20of%20the%20Crime%20of%20Apartheid.pdf](#)

- i. affirming UN General Assembly Resolution 3236 (1974)<sup>5</sup>, which affirms the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in Palestine, including the right to self-determination without external interference, the right to national independence and sovereignty, and the right to return to “their homes and property from which they have been displaced and uprooted.”
  - ii. affirming UN Security Council Resolution 2334 (2016)<sup>6</sup>, which states that Israeli settlements constitute "a flagrant violation under international law" and says that all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, must “immediately and completely cease.”
  - iii. affirming UN General Assembly Resolution a/res/77/247 (2023) asking the International Court of Justice for an advisory opinion on the consequences of Israel’s never-ending military occupation of Palestinian land<sup>7</sup>.
  - iv. working with allies within the UN to advance an Israel-Palestine peace process based on international law and justice, rather than counter important resolutions.
2. **Canada should protect and promote the human rights of Palestinians, including the right to non-violently resist oppression under the ongoing occupation, consistent with their right to self-determination. Furthermore, Canada should respect and uphold the right of Canadians to freedom of expression and choice, including the right to engage in boycott and divestment in opposition to the Israeli occupation.**
- a. The Universal Declaration on Human Rights states that “*Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against **tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law.*** In international law, this is closely linked to the right to self-determination. Canada has voted for the UN resolution on the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. Yet Canada has simultaneously opposed Palestinians’ rights to use the non-violent tools of boycott, divestment and sanctions to resist the very oppression that undermines their self-determination. Canada’s self-declared commitment to the rule of law and its obligations under international law require that Canada uphold, protect and promote the right of Palestinians to self-determination, which includes their right to resist the deepening oppression of the ongoing occupation.
  - b. In February 2016, the House of Commons passed a non-binding motion condemning solidarity with nonviolent resistance to the occupation. Specifically: with the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Movement<sup>8</sup>. This constitutes a disturbing move by Canadian lawmakers to deny and repress the rights of individual Canadians. People have the right to make economic choices and decisions consistent with their individual values and beliefs in response to political, social, cultural and/or economic injustices. In this case, specifically with regard to whether or not individuals choose—financially—to participate in or support systems and structures that maintain and perpetuate the Israel government’s oppression of Palestinian human rights, and its military occupation of Palestinian territories. This right extends to all, including student groups, academic institutions, faculties, faith groups, labour unions, civil society and social movements.
3. **Canada should amend the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA) specifically with regard to goods entering Canada which are produced in Israeli settlements, including the addition of the following two**

<sup>5</sup> United Nations’ General Assembly resolution 3236, November 22, 1974, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/738/38/PDF/NR073838.pdf?OpenElement>, accessed on July 3, 2023.

<sup>6</sup> United Nations’ Security Council Resolution 2334, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/SRES2334.pdf>, December 16, 2016, accessed on July 3, 2023.

<sup>7</sup> “Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem : resolution / adopted by the General Assembly”, [https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/A.RES.77.247\\_301222.pdf](https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/A.RES.77.247_301222.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Vote No. 14, 42nd parliament, 1st session, <https://www.ourcommons.ca/Members/en/votes/42/1/14/>

**provisions:**

- i. A clearly-stated provision which prohibits CIFTA from having any force or effect in any of the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT)<sup>9</sup>, such that preferential terms of trade outlined in the Agreement do not apply to the entry into Canada of any goods or services produced, in whole or in part, in Israeli settlements, industrial parks, farms or other enterprises located in the OPT; and**
    - ii. A human rights provision, committing both parties to uphold all of the contemporary standards of international human rights and humanitarian law.**
  - a. Despite its policy position that it does not recognize Israel’s authority over Palestinian territories and which acknowledges that under both Canadian and international law, all Israeli settlements are illegal, Canada nevertheless maintains the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA) that enables goods produced in the illegal settlements into the Canadian economy with all the benefits and exemptions provided for under CIFTA, and which either are or can be mislabeled as “Made in Israel”. Accurate labelling would protect Canadian consumers, allowing them to make informed choices with regard to their purchasing decisions.
  - b. At the core of the thickening Israeli settlement enterprise is a discriminatory two-tier system of laws, political rights, zoning laws, roads, property, public services and access to courts, based entirely on ethnicity. The illegal Israeli settlements are the engine of the occupation: they serve as the irreducible ‘facts on the ground’ to assert Israeli sovereignty and to forestall Palestinian self-determination.
  - c. These settlements are also central to the systemic human rights harm caused to the Palestinians. This includes the use of collective punishment, the confiscation of land and natural resources under various guises, the presence of hundreds of military checkpoints, the practice of settler violence, the forcible transfer of communities, the death and injuries of civilians with little accountability by the Israeli military and police, the regular detention of children, environmental degradation, the confiscation of natural resources, the de-development of the Palestinian economy and the denial of fundamental freedoms.
- 4. Canada should take specific actions to protect and promote the rights of Palestinian children living under Israeli military occupation.**
- a. As a signatory of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Canada has an obligation to protect and promote the rights of all children, including Palestinian children, who live under Israeli military occupation and are denied basic rights<sup>10</sup>. Palestinian children are vulnerable to arrest and detention by Israeli soldiers, whether or not they have violated any laws or committed any offenses. Furthermore, DCIP records that “Palestinian children in the occupied West Bank, like adults, face arrest, prosecution, and imprisonment under an Israeli military detention system that denies them basic rights”. These facts and statistics documented by DCIP are further corroborated by independent studies done by other children’s rights organizations, including UNICEF<sup>11</sup>.

According to a February 2022 brief submitted by DCIP to the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development of the Canadian House of Commons, and endorsed by The United Church of Canada, Mennonite Central Committee Canada, and Oakville

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<sup>9</sup> For the purposes of clarity, and consistent with international law, the OPT consists of the West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza.

<sup>10</sup> “Arbitrary by Default: Palestinian Children in the Israeli Military Court System”, Defense for Children International-Palestine, May 2023, [https://www.dci-palestine.org/arbitrary\\_by\\_default](https://www.dci-palestine.org/arbitrary_by_default)

<sup>11</sup> UNICEF, “Children in Israeli military detention: Observations and Recommendations,” 1, (2013), [https://www.unicef.org/opt/unicef\\_opt\\_children\\_in\\_israeli\\_military\\_detention\\_observations\\_and\\_recommendations\\_-\\_6\\_march\\_2013.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/opt/unicef_opt_children_in_israeli_military_detention_observations_and_recommendations_-_6_march_2013.pdf)

Palestinian Rights Association, ill-treatment of Palestinian child detainees by the Israeli military is “widespread, systematic and institutionalized”. Israeli military law has applied to Palestinians in the West Bank since 1967, when Israel occupied the territory following the Six Day War. While Israeli military law gives military courts the authority to try any person located inside the occupied territory as long as they are 12 years or older, Jewish settlers who reside within the bounds of the West Bank, in violation of international law, are subject to the Israeli civilian legal framework. Accordingly, Israel operates **two separate and unequal legal systems in the same territory**.

- b. Under international humanitarian law, Israel as the “Occupying Power” has clear obligations to protect the Palestinian civilian population under its control and has the authority to establish military courts in the territory it has occupied since 1967. However, international human rights and humanitarian law, which apply to the Occupied Palestinian Territory,<sup>12</sup> restrict the jurisdiction of the Israeli military courts and guarantee basic safeguards for a fair trial. Accordingly, individuals should be presumed innocent, they should not be compelled to testify against themselves or confess guilt, and they should be informed promptly and in detail of the charges against them in a language that they understand.<sup>13</sup> Palestinians child detainees are systematically denied these rights<sup>14</sup>.
- c. In April 2018, 18 Canadian MPs participated in a parliamentary delegation to Palestine sponsored by the Canada-Palestine Parliamentary Friendship Group. During their visit, the MPs met with 16-year-old Fawzi al-Juneidi, a Palestinian boy detained by Israeli forces on December 7, 2017 in the occupied West Bank city of Hebron.<sup>15</sup> Fawzi’s detention was caught on video and an image of him bound, blindfolded, bruised and surrounded by around 20 Israeli soldiers went viral on social media.<sup>16</sup> Fawzi shared his experience of detention, interrogation, and prosecution in the Israeli military detention system. DCIP lawyer Farah Bayadsi, who represented Fawzi in the Israeli military court system, highlighted the systemic due process denials that are the norm for Palestinian children detained by Israeli forces, including no right to counsel during interrogation.
- d. Upon their return, the MPs published a report summarizing their visit. The report included recommendations to the Canadian government. Church leaders reiterate these recommendations in this submission that the Canadian government should work with international partners to:
  - i. appoint a Special Envoy to promote, monitor and report on the human rights situation of Palestinian children living in the Palestinian territory, specifically undertaking an evaluative analysis as to Israeli military law and practice as they affect Palestinian children in the West Bank by reference to the standards of international law and international children’s rights;
  - ii. take concrete steps to promote greater respect for human rights and increase protections for

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<sup>12</sup> The Occupied Palestinian Territory consists of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. See International Court of Justice, *Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Advisory Opinion*, 2004 I.C.J. 136, ¶¶ 101, 109-113 (Jul. 9, 2004), <http://www.icj-cij.org/docket/files/131/1671.pdf>.

<sup>13</sup> International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, G.A. Res. 2200A (XXI), art. 14, U.N. Doc. A/6316 (1966), <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/ccpr.pdf>; UN Human Rights Committee, *General Comment No. 32, Article 14: Right to equality before courts and tribunals and to a fair trial*, ¶ 22, UN Doc. CCPR/C/GC/32 (Aug. 23, 2007), [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=CCPR/C/GC/32](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=CCPR/C/GC/32).

<sup>14</sup> “Arbitrary by Default: Palestinian children in the Israeli Military Court system”, Defense for Children International Palestine, May 2023, retrieved on June 18, 2023, [https://assets.nationbuilder.com/dcipalestine/pages/5323/attachments/original/1685539867/Arbitrary\\_by\\_Default.pdf](https://assets.nationbuilder.com/dcipalestine/pages/5323/attachments/original/1685539867/Arbitrary_by_Default.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> NWTAC, CANADIAN MP DELEGATION MEETS WITH DCIP AND FORMER CHILD DETAINEE, (Apr. 23, 2018), [https://nwtac.dci-palestine.org/canadian\\_mp\\_delegation\\_meets\\_with\\_dcip\\_and\\_former\\_child\\_detainee](https://nwtac.dci-palestine.org/canadian_mp_delegation_meets_with_dcip_and_former_child_detainee).

<sup>16</sup> The viral photo of Fawzi al-Juneidi is on the cover of February 2022 brief submitted by DCIP to the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development of the Canadian House of Commons and endorsed by The United Church of Canada, Mennonite Central Committee Canada, and Oakville Palestinian Rights Association. It is also on the cover of the May 2023 DCIP Report “Arbitrary by Default: Palestinian children in the Israeli Military Court system”

- Palestinian children; and
- iii. hold Israeli military authorities accountable to their obligations under international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

**5. Canada should work with other international parties to hold Israel accountable, in keeping with the Founding Document of the State of Israel, May 1948, to its obligations to protect places of worship and religious sites of all religions, to respect the rights to freedom of worship for Israelis and Palestinians alike, and to ensure full and equal access to places of worship for all Palestinians and Israelis.**

- a. In December 2022 and January 2023, Archbishop Linda Nicholls and Bishop Susan Johnson wrote to Prime Minister Trudeau expressing deep concern for attacks on Christian, Jewish and Muslim places of worship in Palestine and Israel. In their letters, the church leaders said that while they are grateful for Canada's commitment to human rights globally and, in particular, the ongoing support of "the special and historic status of Jerusalem as a city sacred to the Abrahamic faiths, including Christianity", they are concerned that attacks on the Christian community and their places of worship have increased in frequency and severity in recent years. Palestinian Christians in Haifa are forced to take measures themselves to protect churches and holy sites from repeated attacks by Israeli extremists who are protected from consequences by the current Israeli government. The Catholic News Agency reported on 31 July 2023 that Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, has raised concerns, saying that "Christians are increasingly enduring persecution in the Holy Land", and that "the current administration of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has created a political climate in which acts of aggression are tolerated."<sup>17</sup>

"The frequency of these attacks, the aggressions, has become something new," Pizzaballa said during Easter week, **LaCroix International** reported. "These people feel they are protected ... that the cultural and political atmosphere now can justify, or tolerate, actions against Christians."<sup>18</sup>

- b. In January 2023, the Protestant cemetery on Mt. Zion, currently under the oversight of the Anglican Church in Jerusalem was desecrated. In late 2022, St. Andrew's Church, Ramallah was raided by Israeli forces seeking the offices of a human rights organization, Al-Haq, which rented space in the building but had a separate entrance. During their December 2022 visit, Bishop Susan Johnson and Archbishop Linda Nicholls heard from church leaders about the increasing fragility of the Palestinian Christian presence in the Holy Land in light of these acts of violence. The basis for this concern is reported on widely, and has been well-documented. In 2012 and again in 2023, Kairos Palestine and BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights collaborated on comprehensive studies on the decline in numbers of indigenous Palestinian Christians, documenting specific cases with findings that the decline in numbers of Palestinian Christians "is mainly and directly related to Israeli colonial and apartheid policies"<sup>19</sup>.

"For Palestinians generally, including Palestinian Christians, the *Nakba* is an ongoing reality and an ongoing catastrophe given that Palestinians continue to be denied their right to return and many

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<sup>17</sup> "Israeli extremists attempt to storm Catholic church and monastery", Catholic News Agency, July 31, 2023, <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/254952/israeli-extremists-attempt-to-storm-catholic-church-in-northern-israel> , accessed on August 1, 2023.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> "Palestinian Christians - The Forcible Displacement and Dispossession Continues", BADIL/Kairos Palestine, May 2023, <https://www.kairospalestine.ps/images/kairos-badil-2023.pdf> , accessed on August 21, 2023

remain at risk of forcible displacement and transfer.”<sup>20</sup>

- c. Canada’s continued silence on the escalation of assaults of various kinds against Christians by Israel’s religious extremists and illegal settlers emboldens such violations of international law and universal human rights. While Canadian churches have a particular responsibility to advocate for the rights and protection of Palestinian Christians, the churches are deeply concerned for the rights and protection of the Palestinian Muslim community, which is also experiencing increased violence at sites such as the Al Aqsa Mosque. Freedom of worship and of religion are human rights that all states are obligated to uphold and respect.
  - d. Specifically, the Canadian government should:
    - i. ensure that any ongoing diplomatic, economic and security cooperation with the government of Israel is contingent upon the Israeli government’s respect for the rights of Palestinians to fully and equally access places of worship and holy sites without exception;
    - ii. publicly express Canada’s concern for the safety and dignity of the Christian community in the Holy Land and support the right to security of its people, buildings and properties; and
    - iii. uphold the status quo<sup>21</sup> for all holy places in the Holy Land in accordance with international law and relevant UN resolutions, and as an important place of worship and reverence for three religions and two peoples. In particular, Canada should oppose any unilateral actions to overturn the status quo on the status of Jerusalem, including Israel’s unilateral annexation of East Jerusalem and its environs.
- 6. Canada should take leadership in the international community to end the blockade on Gaza and ensure residents have immediate access to humanitarian assistance and freedom of movement, while affirming the necessary conditions to address Israel’s legitimate security concerns.**
- 7. Canada should increase funding to UNRWA to \$50 million annually to provide essential services to millions of refugees, including those in Gaza where 70 percent are refugees of 1948.**
- We affirm the decision of the Canadian government in 2020 committing to \$90 million over three years to support UNRWA’s work. However, this funding is not increasing rapidly enough to fill the critical gap in UNRWA’s budget. We urge Canada to give \$50 million annually to UNRWA, matching Norway’s contribution based on GDP.

## Summary of recommendations

Canada should:

1. adjust its voting in the UN General Assembly so as to bring it in line with its own official policy on Israel-

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid

<sup>21</sup> The status quo regarding holy places in the Holy Land, particularly Jerusalem and Bethlehem, was established in the Treaty of Berlin in July 1878 between the Ottoman Empire and European powers. “Article 62 of the Berlin Treaty extended the Status Quo to include all holy places and not only Christian sites. The Status Quo arrangement is a unique and delicate legal system that contains a specific set of rights and obligations that were created over centuries of practice and are now considered binding international law. It therefore supersedes any and all aspects of domestic law. Article LXII states that “It is well understood that no alterations can be made in the status quo in the Holy Places.” (Jerusalem’s Status Quo Agreement: History and Challenges to Its Viability” Jun 7, 2022, Mounir Marjeh, <https://arabcenterdc.org/resource/jeruselems-status-quo-agreement-history-and-challenges-to-its-viability/>, accessed on September 7, 2023).



- Palestine, with international law and all relevant United Nations Resolutions.
2. protect and promote the human rights of Palestinians, including the right to non-violently resist oppression under the ongoing occupation. Furthermore, Canada should respect and uphold the right of Canadians to freedom of expression and choice, including the right to engage in boycott and divestment in opposition to the Israeli occupation.
  3. amend the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA) specifically with regard to goods entering Canada which are produced in Israeli settlements, and include in the amended Agreement the addition of the two provisions named in points 3. i and 3. ii in this brief.
  4. take specific action to protect and promote the rights of Palestinian children living under Israeli military occupation. Appointing a Special Envoy to monitor and report on violations of the rights of Palestinian children in the Israeli military detention system is a necessary first step Canada should take.
  5. work with other international parties to hold Israel accountable to its obligations to protect places of worship and religious sites of all religions, to respect the rights to freedom of worship for Israelis and Palestinians alike, and to ensure full and equal access to places of worship for all Palestinians and Israelis.
  6. take leadership in the international community to end the blockade on Gaza and ensure residents have immediate access to humanitarian assistance and freedom of movement, while affirming the necessary conditions to address Israel's legitimate security concerns.
  7. increase funding to UNRWA to \$50 million annually to provide essential services to millions of refugees, including those in Gaza where 70 percent are refugees of 1948.

*This document was prepared with input from the Anglican Church of Canada, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and The United Church of Canada. These four mainline Protestant Christian denominations represent millions of Canadians and work with long-standing Palestinian and Israeli partners towards a just and lasting peace in Palestine and Israel.*