



Policy Recommendations for Canada

- A. **Canada must support the Palestinians' aspiration for self-determination:** Voting in favour of Palestinian self-determination at the UN is consistent with the long-standing policy of all major Canadian political parties in favour of a two-state solution. Official Canadian foreign policy has long supported the two state-solution – a measure that by nature requires Palestinian self-determination and the creation of a Palestinian state. Canada must take the necessary steps, both domestically and internationally, to recognize the State of Palestine. Having statehood will reduce Palestinians' relative powerlessness in their dealings with Israel. Palestinians are ready to govern themselves and deal with other nations as equals.
- B. **Canada must insist that Israel halt all actions that prevent the emergence of a Palestinian state, especially its occupation and colonization of Palestinian land:** Israel has militarily occupied the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, since 1967, and controls most aspects of life there and in Gaza. Its ongoing establishment of a network of Jewish-only colonies (a.k.a. "settlements") in the occupied Palestinian territories violates the Fourth Geneva Convention and leaves the Palestinians with small patches of non-contiguous land on which to construct a Palestinian state.
- C. **Canada must treat Israelis and Palestinians with equal respect and sensitivity to their respective legitimate concerns:** The Trudeau government have given far more support and attention to Israeli concerns than to Palestinian ones. They have also tolerated conduct by Israeli authorities that it would never tolerate from Palestinian authorities.

A: Canada must support the Palestinians' aspirations for statehood

- 1) Voting in favour of Palestinian self-determination at the UN is consistent with Canada's long-standing policy – since 1947 – in favour of a two-state solution.
 - It's consistent with Canada's support for the 1947 Partition Plan. Canada, along with the majority of UN members, voted in favour of the UN Partition Plan in 1947, which divided the British Mandate of Palestine into two sections, one as a majority Jewish state, and the other to be a majority Arab (i.e. Palestinian) state. Israel issued a unilateral declaration of independence in May 1948, and was admitted to the UN in May 1949. Canada, which recognized Israel in 1948, voted in favour of Israel's admission to the UN. Yet 62 years later, the Palestinian state has still not been allowed to emerge nor be formally recognized by Canada.
 - It's consistent with Canada's support for a two-state solution. Voting against Palestinian self-determination contradicts the stated commitment of all major Canadian political parties to a two-state solution. Canada should formally therefore recognize the state of Palestine and vote in favour of its admission to the UN and UN agencies as a full member state. This does not contradict recognition of Israel: on the contrary, 105 of the 128 UN members who already formally recognize the state of Palestine also recognise the state of Israel.
 - It is consistent with the timely resolution of the Israel-Palestine issue. In view of Israel's refusal to negotiate peace in a timely manner, Canada and other nations cannot justify making their support for Palestinian self-determination conditional on the achievement of such an agreement with Israel. Doing so leaves the Palestinians completely vulnerable to Israel's unilateral ongoing land grabs, and the progressive reduction of the land available for the establishment of their state.
- 2) Voting for Palestinian self-determination at the UN will facilitate more fruitful negotiations.

- It will demonstrate that the status quo is unacceptable. It will send a clear signal to Israelis, Palestinians and others that Canada considers the status quo unsustainable. It will spur the Israeli authorities to halt the violations of international law that have derailed so many rounds of negotiations. This, in turn, will encourage negotiations that bring the conflict to an end.
 - It will slightly reduce the tremendous imbalance of power between Israel and Palestine. This will discourage both sides from resorting to violence, and will encourage negotiations in good faith.
 - Israel is one of the world’s strongest military powers and has inflicted far more civilian casualties on Palestinians than vice-versa. For example, since March 2018, Israeli security forces have injured over 30,000 Palestinians and killed over 200 civilians, including children, members of the media and medics, merely for exercising their right to protest at the border.¹ No Israeli lives were threatened during these peaceful protests.
 - Support for Palestinian self-determination would be a first step to ending lawless acts committed under Israel’s occupation of the West Bank. It would legitimize Palestinian proceedings against Israel at the International Court of Justice and open the door to UN sanctions for the violations.
- 3) Canada and the rest of the international community have confirmation that the Palestinian Authority is ready to govern.
- Neutral international bodies assert the PA’s readiness to govern. The IMF and the World Bank consider the Palestinian Authority ready to govern. The UN Office of the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO) has also concluded that the Palestinian Authority is ready to govern. In 2010 and 2011 UNSCO assessed the PA’s performance in six areas: governance, rule of law and human rights; livelihoods and productive sectors; education and culture; health; social protection; and infrastructure and water. It found that the Palestinian Authority was largely ready to govern, and was in fact already doing so reasonably well in the geographical areas where it exercised sufficient control.
- 4) By supporting Palestinian statehood, Canada will strengthen the hand of Palestinians committed to non-violent self-determination. It will make it easier for them to convince other Palestinian groups that armed struggle is not the only option to achieve self-determination.
- 5) Canada should not disparage Palestine’s bid for self-determination as “unilateral.”
- Appealing to the international community for self-determination makes Palestine’s decision eminently multi-lateral. Palestinian leaders are submitting themselves to the judgement of a multilateral institution. Over half of the members of the UN have already recognized the state of Palestine and many encouraged Palestine to be active in the UN and its agencies, such as UNESCO.
 - Palestine seeks self-determination and recognition by the UN like any other country would. Canada, which voted for Israel’s admission to the UN cannot now credibly complain about Palestinians’ aspirations for self-determination.
- 6) By balancing its long-time support for Israel with support for Palestinian statehood, Canada may start to re-establish its reputation as an honest broker.

B: Canada must insist that Israel halt all actions that prevent the emergence of a viable Palestinian state

- 1) Canada must pressure Israel to cease its occupation of Palestinian territories. In one of the longest military occupations in modern history, Israel has occupied the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, since 1967, and controls most aspects of life there and in Gaza. Numerous UN resolutions have called on Israel to end its military occupation and withdraw to the borders in effect just prior to the 1967 war. The occupation makes it impossible for Palestinians to construct and manage a viable sovereign

¹ “Humanitarian Coordinator for the occupied Palestinian territory, Mr. Jamie McGoldrick, calls for action to prevent further loss of life and injury in the Gaza Strip.” OCHA. March 29, 2019

Palestinian state. The occupation keeps Palestinians in a position of subjugation and prevents them from exercising their right to self-determination.

- 2) Canada must pressure Israel to halt its colony building on Palestinian land. Israel's colony-building violates international law. Once it stops building colonies, Israel must subsequently withdraw from existing illegal colonies, unless agreements for land swaps are reached with the Palestinians.
- 3) Canada must pressure Israel to lift the blockade of Gaza. The blockade violates international law — which prohibits collective punishment. The blockade of Gaza prevents Palestinians in Gaza from exercising their collective right to self-determination and from constructing, together with Palestinians in the West Bank, a viable Palestinian state. Moreover, the blockade has caused a humanitarian disaster. The electricity, water, and sanitation infrastructure in Gaza is deteriorating rapidly, and the UN has asserted that Gaza will be uninhabitable by 2020.²

C: Canada must treat Israelis and Palestinians with equal respect

- 1) Recent Canadian governments have expressed far more support for Israeli leaders and their concerns than for Palestinian leaders and the rights of their citizens.
 - The Trudeau government has been quick to condemn even non-lethal rocket-fire from Gaza, while ignoring Israeli assaults on Gaza that have produced thousands of casualties. The overall – and untrue – impression one would receive from Canadian government comments is that Israeli casualties far outstrip Palestinian ones.
 - The Trudeau government has been silent about Israel's ongoing expansion of Jewish-only colonies. The Trudeau government votes against resolutions at the UN, arguing that they are “biased” or seek to “single out Israel.” Again, it is inconceivable that any Canadian government would remain so muted in its objections were armed Palestinian groups to venture into Israeli territory, evict Israelis at gunpoint, destroy their homes and crops, and begin erecting apartment buildings to be used only by Palestinians.
 - As well, Canada has ignored the detention of thousands of Palestinian political prisoners, many of them without charges. Notable recent prominent cases include Khalida Jarrar, Ahed Tamimi, and Ubai Al-Aboudi. It is improper to ignore the detention of Palestinian political prisoners, and particularly disrespectful to not press for the release of detained Palestinian legislators.
- 2) Canada must stop tolerating conduct from the Israeli authorities that it would not tolerate from Palestinian leaders. It must instead signal that it intends to be even-handed in its stated commitment to a “two-state solution” to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
 - Canada was shockingly unenthusiastic in its expression of concern for Palestinian protestors being injured and killed by Israeli authorities in Gaza, beginning in March, 2018. Canada would not have been as muted had Hamas or Fatah launched an assault on Israel that killed hundreds of Israelis.
 - The Trudeau government has done nothing to hold Israel to account for its shooting of Canadian doctor Tarek Loubani in May 2018. The Israeli authorities have refused to cooperate with an investigation into the shooting of Loubani and the lethal killings of other Palestinian civilians, medics and journalists.
- 3) Voting to admit Palestine will help restore Canada's credibility as an honest broker. Canada's reputation has been seriously tarnished by the unbalanced stances that it has taken in recent years on developments in the Middle East.

For more Information...

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² <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/gaza-unliveable-un-special-rapporteur-for-the-situation-of-human-rights-in-the-opt-tells-third-committee-press-release-excerpts/>