


# 'Very disappointed with Canada's response': Palestine-Israel turmoil exposes Canada's 'empty both sides approach,' expert says

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Sakeina Syed

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·Contributor

May 18, 2021, 2:36 p.m. · 6 min read

Thousands of people gathered in cities across Canada this past weekend for peaceful protests in support of the Palestinian solidarity movement, including rallies in Vancouver, Saint John, Ottawa and Toronto. As of today, at least 212 Palestinians, including 61 children, have been killed by the Israeli airstrikes on the Gaza Strip. In Israel, officials say 12 people, including two children have been killed since the fighting started over a week ago.

As the death toll escalates, activist groups and members of the public are expressing disappointment with the Canadian government's lack of condemnation towards Israel.

This discontent is being echoed by some politicians, with federal NDP leader Jagmeet Singh calling for Trudeau to halt the sale of arms to Israel "until the end of the illegal occupation."



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According to the Government of Canada's official policy guide, Canada "does not recognize permanent Israeli control over territories occupied in 1967," including the Golan Heights, the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. The guide highlights that these settlements violate international law, namely the Fourth Geneva Convention.

But in spite of this official position, the government's official statements have made little mention of the Israeli raids and airstrikes on these illegally occupied territories. Despite Palestinian deaths numbering in the hundreds and over 30,000 residents of Gaza displaced from their homes by the air raids, the statements only extend as far as condemning general violence in the region.

## 'Disappointment' over Canada's response to violent raids, evictions

Michael Bueckert is the Vice President of Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME), a non-profit and secular organization that aims to promote justice and development in the Middle East. He said that CJPME is “very disappointed with Canada's response to the protests over the Sheikh Jarrah evictions, the violent raids against Al Aqsa and the airstrikes in Gaza.”

“In general, all statements have taken an empty ‘both sides’ approach which fails to recognize the distinction between occupied and occupier,” said Bueckert, who holds a PhD from Carleton University specializing in political economy. He adds that the Canadian government’s statements “do not directly name—let alone condemn—Israel’s colonial actions.”



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In Minister of Foreign Affairs Marc Garneau’s statement on May 12, he unequivocally condemns rocket attacks “fired by Hamas.” But when it comes to that week’s Israeli police raids on Al-Aqsa that left 350 Palestinians injured and 250 hospitalized, Garneau does not mention a perpetrator, instead referring broadly to “unacceptable violence” at the holy site.

More tellingly, in Garneau’s statement and Global Affairs Canada’s next statement on May 16, no mention at all is made of the Israeli airstrikes. The May 16 statement was posted at 11:55 p.m., but made no mention of the approximately 188 Palestinian deaths from 55 Israeli air raids that had taken place by that point.



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The statement mentions violence against journalists and “humanitarian workers and facilities under fire,” but never specifies who perpetrated these acts or who the victims were.

Those reading the federal government’s official statements are presented with a picture devoid of any mention of Palestinian deaths at all, let alone direct condemnation of Israel’s airstrikes—or even the word ‘airstrike’ itself.

When asked for clarification on this, a Global Affairs Canada spokesperson provided a statement reiterating the same messaging, only adding that “the use of force has led to significant civilian loss of life” and that they “urge utmost restraint.”

Bueckert said it is worth noting that Garneau did mention the evictions in Sheikh Jarrah and Silwan in Parliament last week when asked a question. Bueckert says this suggests “the government is aware of Israel's unjustifiable actions in Jerusalem, and is experiencing

pressure to respond—whether from diplomats or from within the Liberal Party.”

## What is Canada's relationship with Israel?

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In its most recent report in 2019, Canada sent \$13.7 million in military exports to Israel, including \$1.2 million for bombs, missiles, and other explosive devices, and \$3.1 million for military aircraft.

The country generally votes against or abstains from the 16 UN resolutions on Israeli-Palestinian matters, including issues like sovereignty, human rights, and Israeli settlements. This pattern was set around 2006, when the Harper government was in power.

However, in November 2019 Canada voted “yes” on one of these resolutions, in support of Palestinian right to self-determination. The resolution criticized the Israeli barrier wall, and mentioned the urgency of reaching an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967. This singular vote was seen by some as a divergence from Canada’s traditional pattern of abstaining from UN votes on the issue, or siding with Israel.

## Canadians demand action and equality, not empty words

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For those attending this weekend’s Palestine solidarity protests, frustration with the Canadian government’s stance is a common theme.

Nada, a Canadian graduate student, attended the weekend’s protests in the hopes of seeing Canada cease its arms deal with Israel. “My tax money is being used to murder innocent children,” she said. “How can we, as a ‘democratic’ country, a country that claims it supports global human rights, be directly investing money in weapons to murder innocent people?”

Yusra, a Canadian university student, said she attended her first-ever protest at Toronto’s Nathan Phillips Square on Saturday not only because of the “ongoing ethnic cleansing” occurring in Palestine, but also because of the Canadian government’s response to it.

“

I can’t stand how they have said so many words that mean absolutely nothing, but still will not at all acknowledge Israel’s crimes,” she said. “They say they want the violence to stop, and still will not place sanctions on the weaponry they give to Israel. They preach peace and a diverse country that is accepting, and yet the people of Toronto scream for them to do something, and they stay idle.”

Bueckert said that for those pushing for direct action from the government, the protests cannot be ignored.

“I don't think it will be possible for the government to miss the fact that Canadians are showing support for Palestinian human rights in massive numbers, in a way which feels unprecedented,” he said.

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### **Marketmind: Why payrolls might not matter to markets**


The yield on two-year U.S. Treasuries, the most sensitive to the interest rate outlook, is down some 26 basis points (bps) this week alone to around 4.22%. For some, the euphoria surrounding the notion that inflation has peaked, meaning the Federal Reserve can start to slow the pace of aggressive rate hikes, needs a reality check. One line of argument goes that to justify the move seen in government bond markets, the Fed needs to be more or less done in December.

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### **Wall Street bankers to see bonuses shrink as dealmaking sputters - Bloomberg Law**

Citigroup Inc and Bank of America Corp are considering cutting bonus pools by as much as 30%, the report said, citing people with knowledge of the internal deliberations. Investment banks have been hit by a plunge in dealmaking activity this year as torrid markets and aggressive rate hikes by the Federal Reserve have forced lenders to pull back from financing large deals. Goldman Sachs Group Inc is also planning to shrink the year-end bonuses for traders at its global markets unit by a low double-digit percentage, a separate report from Bloomberg News earlier on Friday said, citing people with knowledge of the discussions.

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- **Q&A: Jacob Harold creates philanthropist 'toolbox,' guide**

Jacob Harold believes philanthropy needs more “strategic promiscuity” – battling the world’s problems using a variety of approaches. It’s an idea that mirrors his wide-ranging career. Harold was president and CEO of GuideStar before it merged with Foundation Center to form the even larger nonprofit information source Candid, which he co-founded. He worked with the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation to make its giving more effective and with The Bridgespan Group, he helped philanthropists and f

- **Banks outline downturn prep in latest earnings results while still talking growth**

TORONTO — From boosting cash on hand to cutting staff, Canadian banks are taking a variety of strategies to prepare for a widely expected economic slowdown in the year ahead. Banks outlined some of their approaches in their fourth quarter results this week, which saw executives strike notes of caution because of the variety of economic pressures, while still committing to a push for growth. "As we look ahead to 2023, global economic growth is expected to be slower as central banks continue with


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### **Marketmind: Powell clears the decks**

Intended or not, investors clearly read Wednesday's keynote speech by the Federal Reserve chair as a green light for a yearend relief rally in beaten down assets. On the face of it, Fed chief Jerome Powell merely confirmed what most had already assumed - that the Fed would downshift the size of its interest rate rises to half a point next month. But stocks soared and the dollar skidded on a number of nuances, not least Powell's pointed assertion that policymakers did not want to "overtighten" policy - even if his reasoning was they wanted to keep rates higher for longer at a sustainable level.

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Under the concept of VAPORESSO Care, a recycling and social giveback campaign launched in the run-up to this year's festive season, VAPORESSO is a world-leading vaping brand, has further reinforced its commitment to the environment and community, advancing its corporate social responsibility (CSR) pledges by giving customers a special shopping experience while creating a simple way to empower them to support global environmental efforts and people in need this winter.


- **FTX ex-CEO Bankman-Fried claims he was unaware of improper use of customer funds -ABC News**

WASHINGTON (Reuters) -FTX founder Sam Bankman-Fried denied knowing that deposits were being used to pay its affiliated cryptocurrency trading firm Alameda Research, he told ABC News in an interview that aired on Thursday. That interview occurred less than a day after Bankman-Fried appeared via video link at the New York Times' DealBook Summit with Andrew Ross Sorkin, in which he said he "didn't ever try to commit fraud," and that he does not personally think he has any criminal liability for the firm's collapse. FTX filed for bankruptcy and Bankman-Fried stepped down as chief executive on Nov. 11, after traders pulled \$6 billion from the platform in three days and rival exchange Binance abandoned a rescue deal.

- **Hydro-Québec salutes the significant contribution made by Jacynthe Côté as Chair of its Board of Directors**

Jacynthe Côté, the first woman to chair Hydro-Québec's Board of Directors, recently informed the Québec government that she would not stay on for a second term once her current term ends in May 2023. She has been appointed Chair of RBC's Board of Directors, which will take effect upon her re-election as an independent director at RBC's meeting of shareholders on April 5, 2023.

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### **Meeting of Global Alliance of Leaders in Paris**

On November 29, 2022, meeting of Global Alliance of Leaders for Nuclear Security and Nuclear-Weapon-Free World (GAL), which unites political leaders, diplomats, experts, Nobel peace prize laureates, heads of international NGOs from 45 countries, was held at Dialogue of Continents forum in Paris.

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### **VW confirms looking in Canada to build first North America cell plant**

BERLIN (Reuters) -Volkswagen has begun searching for a site for the German carmaker's first battery cell factory in North America, its CEO announced on Thursday. Confirming an earlier Reuters story, Volkswagen CEO Oliver Blume and Canadian industry minister Francois-Philippe Champagne signed an addendum to their existing memorandum of understanding from August, agreeing to identify suitable sites for the planned cell plant. Blume said that battery technology was key for the company's strategy and that it was committed to investing in North America.


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### **Envest Corp. Acquires Bullfrog Power To Establish Leading Sustainability Solutions Provider**

Envest Corp. ("Envest"), an independent clean energy producer, is pleased to announce the acquisition of Bullfrog Power, Canada's leading green energy provider. Bullfrog Power will become a wholly owned subsidiary of Envest. The acquisition includes Bullfrog Power Inc. ("Bullfrog"), its United States business carried on through Bullfrog Solutions USA Inc., and its subsidiary companies. The acquisition will empower the two organizations to jointly deliver clean energy solutions tailored to custom



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- **"ASTANA CLUB" HELD IN PARIS DURING PRESIDENT OF KAZAKHSTAN VISIT TO FRANCE**

On November 29, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev paid a historic visit to France and held a meeting with his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron. The Presidents discussed the prospects for the further development of strategic partnership and cooperation between two countries.

- **National 988 mental health hotline back up after outage**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The nation's 988 hotline, intended to help anyone experiencing a mental health emergency, was back up and running Friday after a daylong outage. The call service, which was launched in July, was restored shortly before midnight on Thursday. People experiencing a mental health crisis were still able to reach a mental health counselor by texting 988 or by visiting 988lifeline.org to start a chat. The federal government is investigating the hotline's outage, Health and Human Servi


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### **Applications for jobless benefits decline last week**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The number of Americans applying for unemployment benefits came back down last week, hovering near levels suggesting the U.S. labor market has been largely unaffected by the Federal Reserve's aggressive interest rate hikes. Applications for jobless aid fell to 225,000 for the week ending Nov. 26, a decline of 16,000 from the previous week's 241,000, the Labor Department reported Thursday. The four-week moving average of claims, which evens out week-to-week swings, inched up by

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MELBOURNE (Reuters) -Woodside Energy Group Ltd, Australia's top independent gas producer, flagged on Thursday a drop in free cash flow over the next few years, which raised alarm among analysts about future dividend payouts. Woodside's shares fell 1.8% after its annual investor briefing in a broader market that was up 0.9%, even after Chief Executive Officer Meg O'Neill said the company was committed to paying out at least 50% of net profit after tax. Analysts are forecasting a payout of around \$4 billion a year over the next few years, which Barrenjoey analyst Dale Koenders said would use up free cash flow and potentially leave no room for growth projects like the Trion oil project off Mexico, estimated to cost between \$6 billion and \$8 billion.

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**Royals tour US green tech incubator, meet at-risk youth**

BOSTON (AP) — The Prince and Princess of Wales on Thursday heard about solar-powered autonomous boats and low-carbon cement at a green technology startup incubator in suburban Boston before learning how a nonprofit gives young people the tools to stay out jail and away from violence. William and Kate, making their first overseas visit since the death of Queen Elizabeth II, also found time for hundreds of cheering onlookers at each stop on the second of three days in the city. The royal couple sp

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**New York court issues liability ruling against CIBC in Cerberus lawsuit**

TORONTO — CIBC says a New York court has issued a liability ruling against the Canadian bank in a lawsuit brought by Cerberus Capital Management LP. Cerberus filed the lawsuit in November 2015. The case related to an October 2008 transaction in which CIBC issued a limited recourse note to Cerberus specifying certain payment streams, and a subsequent transaction in 2011 in which CIBC sold a residual interest in the streams to the private equity firm. Cerberus claimed damages of US\$1.067 billion a

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### **Wells Fargo cuts hundreds of jobs in mortgage business - Bloomberg News**

Higher inflation and rapidly rising mortgage rates have started to weigh on the housing market as buying homes becomes costlier, hitting what was until last year a booming industry. The latest reductions in the lender's mortgage unit add to thousands already made by Wells Fargo this year, the Bloomberg report said. In June, JPMorgan Chase & Co, the largest U.S. bank by assets, had also started laying off employees in its mortgage business.

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### **Over All Legends, VOOPOO DRAG 4 Officially Released with Its Quadruple Uniqueness**

On November 29th, VOOPOO officially released the fourth-generation MOD of DRAG, DRAG 4. It is a unique mod with a unique look that delivers a unique and advanced vaping experience.

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### **Changes let high school athletes bank big endorsement bucks**

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Jada Williams was a social media star and a talented point guard when she moved with her mother from a Kansas City suburb to San Diego, looking to play basketball for a high school powerhouse and parlay her online prowess into endorsement deals. She found it all in California, which has become the trendsetter among the 19 states that allow high school athletes to profit from their name, image and likeness without affecting their eligibility to play in college. The 17-year-old Wi