



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Canada-Palestine
Parliamentary Friendship Group

October 31, 2022

The Honourable Mélanie Joly
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Minister Joly,

We are writing to you as the chair and vice-chairs of the Canada-Palestine Parliamentary Friendship Group regarding the upcoming series of votes of the United Nations General Assembly regarding the people of Palestine.

We take positive notice of Canada's decision since 2019 to vote in favour of the resolution regarding Palestinian self-determination. While we welcome the regular reconsideration of Canada's position on each of these series of annual votes we also note that, in 2003, the previous Liberal government voted yes to 13 of the 16 resolutions and we believe there is room for further movement still.

Our group recently met in Ottawa with Ambassador Cheikh Niang, Chair of the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and Minister Riyad Mansour, Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations. We understand they also had meetings scheduled with officials from Global Affairs Canada.

Minister Mansour indicated a willingness to work with Canadian officials to address any concerns the government may have around language with the hope of Canada being able to shift to a yes vote on more motions. Specifically, with our group the Ambassadors raised two resolutions:

- Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan; and
- Assistance to Palestine Refugees

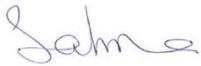
We hope that your officials will work in good faith to find common ground on this pair of resolutions, and we urge Canada to get to a place where it can vote in favour of these resolutions as their spirit is broadly in line with Canadian foreign policy.

For example, Canada has been clear on the illegality of settlements and that their expansion is detrimental to the pursuit of a two-state solution, and that the status of East Jerusalem is a matter for a final peace settlement.

Also, in recent years Canada has increased funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, and this was noted with appreciation by Minister Mansour.

Canada has rightly positioned itself as a champion for human rights around the world. We urge you to ensure this noble ideal is reflected in our voting position on these upcoming United Nations General Assembly votes.

Yours sincerely,



Salma Zahid
Chair
MP, Scarborough Centre



Mario Beaulieu
Vice Chair
MP, La Pointe-de-l'Île



Alexandre Boulerice
Vice Chair
MP, Rosemont—La Petite-Patrie



Elizabeth May
Vice Chair
MP, Saanich—Gulf Islands