



– FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE –

## **New Report Raises Alarms Over Municipal “Bubble Zone” Laws Targeting Pro-Palestine Protests**

Montreal, May 20, 2025 — The rise of municipal “bubble zone” laws across Canada is having a disproportionate and negative impact on pro-Palestinian protests and free expression, according to a new report issued by the Anti-Racism Program of the CJPME Foundation (ARPCF). Titled “[Bubble Zone Laws: Protecting Communities or Cracking Down on Pro-Palestine Dissent?](#)” The report reveals how vague and expansive bylaws in cities like Vaughan and Brampton, and under consideration in Toronto and Ottawa, threaten to create sweeping protest-free zones under the pretext of protecting community safety—zones that are being used to silence political dissent, especially in response to Israel’s genocide in Gaza.

The report finds that many of these laws invoke broad and ambiguous terms like “nuisance demonstration” or “intimidation,” allowing for selective enforcement and raising serious constitutional concerns. Although modelled after historical buffer zones around abortion clinics and hospitals, these new laws go much further, covering large public areas and disproportionately targeting Palestinian solidarity movements. The ARPCF notes that the protests targeted by these bylaws have been overwhelmingly peaceful, and yet are being equated with hatred and violence in the rhetoric of municipal leaders.

“We are witnessing the erosion of democratic space under the guise of public safety,” said Jamila Ewais, Lead Researcher at the ARPCF. “These bylaws are not protecting the vulnerable—they’re shielding political power from accountability, and branding Palestinian voices as inherently threatening. This sets a deeply dangerous precedent, especially when the state and its allies are actively complicit in genocide abroad.” The report critiques not only the legal overreach of these measures, but also the chilling effect they impose on lawful protest and community mobilization, particularly among racialized and marginalized groups.

The ARPCF urges all levels of government to act swiftly to uphold Charter-protected freedoms. The report recommends repealing or significantly revising existing bubble zone bylaws, halting the use of zoning laws to suppress political protest, and affirming that pro-Palestinian expression is a legitimate form of dissent—not a public threat. At a time when Canadians are rising to speak out against war crimes and systemic injustice, silencing those voices is not only unconstitutional—it is morally indefensible.

**About the ARPCF** – *The mandate of the Anti-Racism Program of the CJPME Foundation (ARPCF) is to create public awareness about racism in Canada. This mandate falls in line with the Foundation’s broader purpose of monitoring and combating manifestations of racism, xenophobia, and discrimination by increasing public awareness of such biases.*

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