



Canadian Friends  
Service Committee  
(QUAKERS)

60 Lowther Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5R 1C7  
[www.quakerservice.ca](http://www.quakerservice.ca)

Stephen Harper  
Prime Minister of Canada  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A2

Lawrence Cannon  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
125 Sussex Drive  
Ottawa, ON, Canada, K1A 0G2

June 4, 2010

Dear Stephen Harper and Lawrence Cannon,

Canadian Friends Service Committee, the peace and service arm of Canadian Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), condemns the Israeli military's attack against the humanitarian flotilla off the coast of Gaza, on 31 May 2010. We express our horror at the lethally violent tactics used by the Israeli military, and our sorrow at the injuries and loss of life.

The actions by the Israeli military, which resulted in the death of nine civilians and the injury of dozens more, raise many issues with respect to the principles of peace, justice and respect for international law.

The organizations which mobilized the six ship flotilla had stated clearly that this was a flotilla of ships bringing humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza, and that their intentions were completely nonviolent. Survivors report that the ships were thoroughly searched before setting sail and that even personal pocket knives were not permitted on board.

The attack on the flotilla occurred in international waters, and there was no armed threat to Israel or any Israeli citizens that could remotely justify an argument that the Israeli commandos were acting in the defense of Israel.

We call upon the Government of Canada to support the investigation into the attack on the flotilla, which has been initiated by the U.N. Human Rights Committee. We call upon the Government of Israel to allow all of the humanitarian supplies to reach the people of Gaza.

Currently, two more ships are on their way to Gaza with humanitarian aid with a similar commitment to nonviolence. We ask that Israel allow these ships to enter Gaza and deliver the aid

without incident. We ask that the international community, including the Government of Canada, similarly demand that Israel refrain from interfering with these two additional ships

In addition to condemning this specific attack on humanitarian workers, we also condemn Israel's continued siege against Gaza. We call for the Government of Israel to lift the siege against Gaza, to allow humanitarian aid, including food, medical supplies, educational supplies and construction materials, to flow freely into Gaza.

We ask the Canadian Government to join us in our condemnation of the attack on the flotilla, and in our call for the Israeli Government to lift the blockade of Gaza.

We further ask the Government of Canada to work constructively with the world community to achieve a genuine peace for the Palestinian and Israeli peoples. Such a peace requires justice for the Palestinian people, which must include a complete Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and East Jerusalem, an ending of the siege of Gaza, and an end to any harassment of the Palestinian people by the Government and military of Israel.

Principles of peace and respect for human dignity must prevail over militarism, violence and occupation.

In Friendship,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Merrill Stewart', with a stylized, flowing script.

Merrill Stewart  
Clerk, Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers)

Cc: Miriam Ziv, Ambassador to Canada, Embassy of Israel, Ottawa - Fax: (613) 567-9878

Michael Ignatieff, Leader of the Opposition

Jack Layton, Leader of the NDP

Gilles Duceppe, Leader of the Bloc Quebecois