

The Ontario Government Must End Its Intimidation Of Palestinian Rights Advocacy

We, the undersigned organizations, call on the Ontario government to immediately refrain from defaming and condemning Ontario human rights activists who work in solidarity with the Palestinian people.

In 2005, after the International Court of Justice ruling that found Israel's barrier jutting into the occupied West Bank to be [illegal](#), 171 Palestinian organizations, representing a broad segment of [Palestinian civil society](#), called upon the international community to adopt the tactics of [boycotts, divestments and sanctions](#) until Israel

1. ends its occupation and colonization of all Arab lands occupied in June 1967 and dismantles its separation barrier;
2. recognizes the fundamental rights of Palestinian citizens of Israel to full equality; and
3. respects the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and properties as stipulated in UN Resolution 194.

Each of these demands correspond closely to Canada's official governmental policies, as are stipulated on the [Global Affairs website](#). These demands are based on basic principles of international law.

Nonetheless, the recently defeated [Bill 202](#) claimed that the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement is "anti-Semitic", "anti-Jewish" and "anti-Israeli", and that BDS targets Jewish-owned businesses. In reality, BDS targets Israeli institutions, not individuals, and focuses on corporations—be they Israeli or otherwise—which contribute to Israel's ongoing violations of international law. While it is encouraging that this bill was [resoundingly defeated](#), neither Premier Wynne, nor her governmental counterparts, refuted these baseless allegations put forward by the Ontario PC Party, Liberal MPP Mike Colle, and Canadian Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies.

Furthermore, on June 2nd, Premier Wynne [stated](#) in the Ontario Legislature that during her recent mission to Israel and occupied Palestinian territories—upon the invitation of a pro-Israel lobby group—she proclaimed her commitment to "work with the opposition parties and that we would try to come up with a motion that would pass in this legislature that would reflect the inclusiveness of all the members of this legislature... in the coming weeks."

All of us are in favour of "inclusiveness," but let us not allow this noble sentiment to become a cover for an attack on legitimate political speech.

Premier Wynne has noted her position on the BDS movement, stating, "I entirely oppose the BDS movement. In fact, any position that promotes or encourages anti-Semitism in any way – we have to stand against that." Rather than denounce the defamatory lies that were promoted in our provincial legislature, Wynne has given credence to them.

Support for BDS is a legitimate political position, as it is based on solidarity with the Palestinian people's struggle for freedom, justice and equality. It has been endorsed by numerous Jewish-

Israelis, Jews and Jewish organizations in different countries, and by an impressive list of individuals including Stephen Hawking, Desmond Tutu and Alice Walker.

We ask that the Ontario Legislature support the right of Ontarians to engage in peaceful advocacy for human rights in Israel/Palestine, free from defamation or condemnation from our provincial government.

Signed by:

Ontario Civil Liberties Association
Canadian Union of Public Employees Ontario
Canadian Union of Postal Workers
Independent Jewish Voices Canada
Canadian Arab Federation
Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East
Canadian BDS Coalition
Faculty for Palestine
International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group
Black Lives Matter – Toronto
Canadian Friends Service Committee
Canadians Arabs and Jews for a Just Peace
Palestine Solidarity Working Group (Sudbury)
Colombian Action Solidarity Alliance
Run for Palestine (National)
Circulo Bolivariano Louis Riel
Sudbury Coalition Against Poverty
BDS Action Calgary
Palestinian and Jewish Unity
Canadian Boat to Gaza
Socialist Action
Catholics for Justice and Peace in the Holy Land
PAX CHRISTI
Student Christian Movement of Canada
Students Against Israeli Apartheid at York University
Canada Palestine Association
Socialist Project
Latin American and Caribbean Solidarity Network
Laurier Students Public Interest Research Group
Run for Palestine – Waterloo
Canada Palestine Association – Vancouver
Christian Peacemaker Teams Canada
Mining Injustice Solidarity Network
OPIRG York
OPIRG Windsor
Educators for Peace and Justice
BDS Vancouver-Coast Salish
Palestine Solidarity Network – Edmonton

OPIRG Peterborough
Sunday Poetry
JOURNEY Magazine Peterborough
Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid – Toronto
Canada Talks Israel Palestine
Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network
Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid – Victoria
Queer Ontario
Ontario Humanist Society
Canadian Palestinian Educational Exchange
Peace & Social Action Committee – Toronto Monthly Meeting of the Society of Friends
(Quakers)
Hamilton Coalition to Stop The War
University of Waterloo Students for Palestinian Rights
Independent Jewish Voices – Kingston
Independent Jewish Voices – Toronto
Independent Jewish Voices – Ottawa
Independent Jewish Voices – Hamilton
CODEPINK
Genocide Education Canada
United Network for Just Peace in Palestine & Israel-Toronto
United Network for Just Peace in Palestine and Israel-Canada
Former Ecumenical Accompaniers to Palestine & Israel from Ontario
Action4Palestine
The Toronto New Socialists
Women in Solidarity with Palestine (WSP) – Toronto
International Jewish Anti-Zionist Network – Canada
Coalition to Oppose the Arms Trade
Citizen Action Monitor
Bathurst Street United Church
Students for Justice in Palestine – UOIT/DC
University of Waterloo Palestine Solidarity Action Group
Unitarians Coalition for Social Justice/Unitarians for Palestine
University of Waterloo Muslim Students Association
No One Is Illegal- Toronto
Beit Zatoun
Zatoun