



QUAKERS  
Canadian Friends  
Service Committee

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Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister,  
House of Commons,  
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6

August 31, 2022

Dear Justin Trudeau,

Canadian Friends Service Committee is the peace and social justice agency of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Canada. Since 1931, CFSC has had a commitment to achieving just peace through pacifism and active nonviolence. A number of our members have visited the Occupied West Bank and are deeply troubled by the conditions there.

We were particularly distressed to learn that in early May, after 22 years of litigation, the Israeli Supreme Court dismissed the petitions of the residents of eight Palestinian villages in the Masafer Yatta area of the southern West Bank against their eviction from their homes and grazing land, which has been claimed by the Israeli army as a firing zone. Over 1,000 residents, many of them children, face imminent displacement. Although a civilian population living under occupation is protected under international law (the Hague Regulations, the Fourth Geneva Convention, and the Law of Armed Conflict, among others) and although illegal Israeli settlements that have expanded into the area are allowed to stay, the Palestinian villages are now in grave danger of being bulldozed. In fact, according to the Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, on May 11 the Israeli army demolished 6 homes and several animal shelters, rendering almost 40 people homeless.<sup>1</sup> On June 1 they returned and demolished the simple structures the same families had built for shelter.

Canada is a party to the Geneva Conventions and has a duty to see that they are upheld. It is imperative that Canada speak out on this issue. Please request Robin Wettlaufer, Canada's representative to the Palestinian Authority, to travel to Masafer Yatta as soon as possible and report to you on the situation there.

This situation continues to be extremely urgent. Further demolitions are likely to take place at any time. Canada's voice could make a difference.

In Friendship,

Vince Zelazny,  
Clerk, Canadian Friends Service Committee

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<sup>1</sup> The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, "May 2022 Demolition and Displacement Report," June 5, 2022, <https://icahd.org/2022/06/05/may-2022-demolition-and-displacement-report>