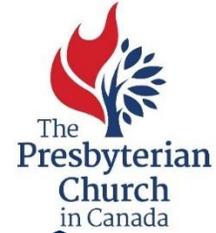




Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in Canada



Canadian Friends  
Service Committee  
*Quakers working for justice and peace*



**CANADIAN  
FRIENDS  
OF SABEEL**



May 22, 2025

Dear Prime Minister Carney,

We write to you on behalf of KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives, Development and Peace: Caritas Canada, The Anglican Church of Canada, Canadian Friends of Sabeel, Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers), The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, Mennonite Church Canada Palestine-Israel Network, The Presbyterian Church in Canada and The United Church of Canada. Together, we unify more than 4 million people from our communities across Canada.

Today marks the one-year anniversary of our collective effort to bring attention to the situation in Gaza. Regrettably, despite our warnings, the situation has significantly deteriorated. We urge you, the government, to reflect on the past year and consider more robust actions to address the apocalyptic humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

A year on, we request an urgent meeting with your office. We believe that under your leadership, Canada can take a principled stand in respecting international law, work to end famine, respond to Israel's plausible genocide in Gaza, and build conditions towards a just peace in Palestine and Israel.

One year ago today, the nation-wide [\*Gaza Ceasefire Pilgrimage: Canadian Churches for Just Peace\*](#) mobilized communities of faith and church leaders from coast to coast to coast who came together in prayerful solidarity to walk the length of the Gaza Strip with their bodies here in Canada. We were among the church leaders who met with Parliamentarians at the end of the Pilgrimage; our actions and calls continue to be informed by long-term partnerships with

churches, development and human rights organizations in Palestine and Israel. Daily, these partners risk their lives, committed to the goal of peace with dignity and justice for all Palestinians and all Israelis.

Church leaders arrived on Parliament Hill in May 2024 with a clear sense of purpose and a deep sense of urgency. It was clear even at the time that crimes against humanity were being committed in Gaza, that there was a serious risk of famine, and that children especially were affected. It was equally clear then that Canada has both a legal and moral obligation to use all means at its disposal to advance a just peace, to ensure that Canada was not complicit in war crimes. The Government of Canada has not lived up to these obligations.

Here is what we continue to ask of the Government of Canada, using all economic, diplomatic and political means at its disposal:

- An immediate, enduring and sustained ceasefire.
- Immediate flow of life-saving food, water, aid, fuel and humanitarian assistance.
- Release of all captives.
- A comprehensive, binding two-way arms embargo on Israel, including closing loopholes (i.e. Canadian arms exports to Israel via the United States).
- Ending Israel's deepening military occupation and annexation of Palestine so a just peace can begin.

It is with profound sadness, shame, and outrage that we witness the situation we warned of in May 2024 and one year earlier in April 2023 having become even more catastrophic. We pray and trust that your administration will take immediate steps to ensure Canada is fulfilling its legal and moral obligations under international law.

When the Pilgrimage met with Parliamentarians one year ago, we:

- cautioned that international experts were flagging that the documented actions of the Israeli state were evidence of **plausible genocide**. The violence waged against Palestinians has become more severe and expanded to Occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank. The international community watches in horror as ethnic cleansing, genocide, annexation and international humanitarian law violations are perpetrated and livestreamed but takes no concrete action to end it. We have written several subsequent letters asking for an urgent meeting and raising concerns about indiscriminate targeting of civilians, hospitals and schools, [concerns](#) about U.S. threats to take over the Gaza strip...;
- raised the alarm that Canada did not have a **two-way arms embargo** and could be complicit in the atrocities. While we appreciate the significance of the passing of the parliamentary motion to ban the export of arms to Israel, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs' assurances that Canadian arms would not be made available for these hostilities, several loopholes mean that Canadian components are likely being used in Israeli military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territories; Canada's procurement strategy has not embargoed the purchase of Israeli arms developed and tested on Palestinians;
- articulated our concerns that Canada was not ensuring safe passage for Gazans seeking **refuge in Canada**. The abject failure of the Temporary Foreign Residence program for

Gazans is well-documented, especially when compared to the success of the program for Ukrainians;

- called on Canada and the international community to ensure that *all* parties, including Hamas and the Israeli state, be **held accountable for international crimes**; and
- urged Canada to exert diplomatic pressure for a **permanent ceasefire and access to humanitarian assistance**. The entire population of Gaza is starving. The WHO reports that 14,000 babies may die within the next 48 hours. Life-saving relief, including aid donated by our churches, sits blocked outside the borders. We appreciate Minister Anand's statements that food must not be used as a political tool. We humbly submit that strong words are not enough. Canada must use all economic, political and diplomatic tools at its disposal to apply pressure to get humanitarian aid moving to address famine.

We appreciate your joint statement with leaders from the UK and France on the situation in Gaza and the West Bank. The strong language is important. We humbly submit that Israel is not at *risk* of breaching international humanitarian law, this has been the case for some time (see the International Court of Justice's [July 2024 advisory opinion](#) and The United Church of Canada's [August 2024 letter](#) to Prime Minister Trudeau). We submit that sanctions are overdue. We look forward to the opportunity to meet urgently with your office in the immediate term. Representatives from our denominations will call on a weekly basis to advance the scheduling.

Best regards,



**The Rt. Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne**  
Moderator  
The United Church of Canada



**The Rev. Susan C. Johnson**  
National Bishop  
The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada



**Leah Reesor-Keller**  
Transitional Executive Director  
KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice  
Initiatives



**Luke Stocking**  
Interim Executive Director  
Development and Peace - Caritas Canada



**Ro Fife**  
Clerk  
Canadian Friends Service Committee  
(Quakers)



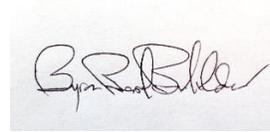
**Archbishop Anne Germond**  
Acting Primate Archbishop  
Anglican Church of Canada

*Patricia Dutcher-Walls*

**The Rev. Dr. Patricia Dutcher-Walls**

Moderator

The Presbyterian Church in Canada



**Byron Rempel-Burkholder**

Chair

Mennonite Church Canada Palestine-Israel

Network

*Rula Odeh*

**Rula Odeh**

Chair

Canadian Friends of Sabeel

cc: The Hon. Anita Anand, Minister of Foreign Affairs

The Hon. Lena Metlege Diab, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada