UNJPPI

United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel

15 September 2026

DELIVERED BY EMAIL

The Honourable Anita Anand, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Foreign Affairs
80 Wellington Street
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Dear Minister Anand,

Re: Canada's Response to Israel's Proposed Settlement Construction in E1

UNJPPI is a grassroots network of United Church of Canada members and friends working through education and advocacy for peace in Palestine/Israel – peace based on justice and equal rights for all people living there.

Our Thanks

Today we write to thank you for the Joint Statement made with the foreign ministers of eleven European countries, promising action in response to the Government of Israel's actions in the West Bank. It is a good first step.

The Statement begins by stating that the Government of Israel's actions are undermining the possibility of a two-State solution. It specifically references the unprecedented levels of settler violence and settlement expansion, and Israel's decision to publish tenders for the E1 settlement project.

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But the State of Israel constructing illegal settlements in the West Bank is not new. It began almost immediately after Israel's military occupation began in 1967. Today there are about 750,000 Israelis illegally living in West Bank and East Jerusalem settlements. And settler violence on Palestinians trying to live normal lives in the abnormal circumstances of military occupation is also not new. It has been part of Palestinian lives for many decades. However, as reflected in the Joint Statement what may be new at this point is powerful Israeli government ministers' open support for the violence.

Canadian policy on key issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has long stated that Israel's settlement construction in the occupied territory is a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Canada has frequently spoken out against that construction but has invariably refrained from taking any other significant action. We do hope that the present Statement is finally recognition that words alone are not enough.

What is Required of the State of Israel?

The following would appear to be the demand being made of Israel:

1. The Government of Israel must immediately halt the expansion of settlements and civilian administrative powers
2. It must ensure accountability for settler violence
3. It must investigate allegations against Israeli forces

How will compliance be assessed? There are respected organizations, such as Peace Now and UN agencies, that monitor settlement approvals and construction in the West Bank. However, in occupied East Jerusalem Palestinians are being evicted from their homes through Israeli court proceedings, with Jewish Israelis then moving in.

Similarly, monitoring accountability for settler violence and investigation of allegations against Israeli forces involves multiple agencies, often with significant discretion.

We wait to see how compliance will be measured.

Is the Action Promised Sufficient?

What is being promised in the Joint Statement is restrictions on trade in goods with illegal settlements. The Statement leaves open that Canada may also be considering other measures.

We do wonder how effective restrictions on trade in settlement products can be. To be effective, it first requires that settlement products be identified. With the close integration of illegal settlements into the Israeli economy, how will Canada identify

which products labeled as made in Israel originate in the settlements or contain components originating there? We look forward to seeing more details as the government plans are finalized.

A Stronger Government of Canada Statement would be Appreciated

We note the Press Release issued by the UK government. It states that in addition to banning the import of goods from illegal settlements, the UK will:

1. Ban advertising or promotion of land and property in illegal settlements
2. Take action on services
3. Go after individuals and companies that "support, facilitate or profit from illegal settlement activity".

The Fact Sheet at the bottom of the UK Press Release also expressly references the July 2024 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice. The Fact Sheet states that in line with the ICJ's central finding, the UK government has concluded "that Israel's ongoing occupation of Palestinian territory is unlawful".

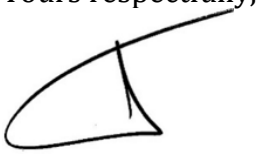
We do not know of the Canadian government ever having made a similar acknowledgment of this impact of the ICJ Advisory Opinion. It is time for Canada to do so.

Conclusion

We thank you and the Canadian government for Canada joining with the eleven European countries signing the September 8th Joint Statement. We wish it could have been stronger but hope it is a sign Canada is joining with other countries to move from statements alone to strong action.

We will continue to monitor what happens going forward. In further correspondence we will provide suggestions of actions Canada should take to help bring peace with justice and compliance with international law.

Yours respectfully,



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