



MODERATOR OF THE 2024 GENERAL ASSEMBLY
The Rev. Dr. Patricia Dutcher-Walls, B.A., M.Div., Th.D.

October 25, 2024

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
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Dear Prime Minister,

The Presbyterian Church in Canada writes out of a deep concern for the situation in the Middle East, which continues to escalate. As the violence spreads, we receive reports from our partners and other organizations in the region about bombed shelters, schools, hospitals, churches and refugee camps – all of which are protected under international law. Additionally, we hear of targeted strikes on essential infrastructure and humanitarian aid being continually blocked. These injustices and the tragic evil that comes with war, the slaughter of adults and children, must rouse us to work for peace: our faith commitments compel us to speak out.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada has a long history of political and economic advocacy where human rights are violated or genocide suspected, and so we write out of a commitment to the protection of all people made vulnerable by violence. We asked the Government of Canada in 1989 and 1990 to impose economic and diplomatic sanctions on South Africa for the South African government's conduct during Apartheid. In 2018, the church asked the Government of Canada whether sanctions could be imposed on high-ranking Myanmar military officers and government officials complicit in gross human rights violations – and the following year, commended the Government of Canada when it did impose those sanctions.

Therefore, in line with our previous commitments and our understanding of what faithful witness in the world today demands, we call for the following actions:

- That Canada unequivocally condemn the Israeli military for the deliberate targeting of schools, shelters, and critical infrastructure, including water and sanitation facilities.
- Regarding weapons or components used in creating weapons, that Canada ensure that it does not directly or indirectly provide to or purchase from any group or state likely to use those weapons or components in violation of human rights.
- In line with sanctions Canada has already imposed on other states and actors in the area, Canada impose sanctions on Benjamin Netanyahu and other Israeli officials as appropriate for their ongoing and blatant violations of international law, targeting of civilians and destruction of essential infrastructure.
- That Canada implement economic sanctions and exercises appropriate diplomatic sanctions with regard to the state of Israel until a ceasefire is in place, full humanitarian aid is restored to Gaza, and the Israeli military ceases violations of international law.
- Canada call upon Israel to allow and facilitate robust lifesaving humanitarian aid and medical assistance of all kinds to enter Gaza immediately.

Clerks of Assembly: The Rev. Victor S.J. Kim and The Rev. Donald G.A. Muir

- That Canada speak out strongly against anti-Palestinian racism, antisemitism, and Islamophobia, none of which should have a place in Canada or anywhere.

We realize the tragic and complex situation in the area is entrenched and seems hopeless, but that is even more reason to work for a sustainable and just peace for all. Otherwise, violence will only continue to escalate and spread. We urge you to continue to push for a permanent ceasefire. Meanwhile, please rest assured of our prayers for the important work you do.

Yours sincerely,



The Rev. Dr. Pat Dutcher-Walls
Moderator of the 2024 General Assembly
The Presbyterian Church in Canada

cc The Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Melanie.Joly@parl.gc.ca
The Honourable Michael Chong, Conservative Party Critic, Michael.Chong@parl.gc.ca
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