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Member of Parliament / Députée
Davenport



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Updated Statement on Israel/Hamas/Palestine

Davenport friends and neighbours,

Thank you to all who have called me and written to me re: the horrific and devastating situation that continues to unfold in the Israel-Hamas War.

I am hearing you.

I have listened to your messages and calls and read your emails. Many of you have asked for:

1. An export ban on any military arms and goods leaving Canada for the Middle East
2. Sanctions on Israel
3. A cut in diplomatic ties with Israel including a recall of our Ambassador and team

Kindly note that any comments that have been updated since my February 2nd statement will be highlighted.

Multiple diverse views in Davenport

The Davenport riding is a wonderful mixture of 106,000 residents with many different opinions. I represent all residents within the riding, and in this communication, I will focus my comments on how Canada can be most effective.

Here are the top three things Canada has prioritized.

1. **Getting Palestinian-Canadians, Palestinian-Canadian PRs and their families out of Gaza.** Canada is doing all it can to get Palestinian-Canadians, Permanent Residents and their extended families out. This is a daily and ongoing negotiation with three groups that have a say at the Rafah border: Israel, Egypt and Hamas. This continues to be a top priority and a focus for Canada. **It is very important to note that Canada is one of the few countries (there may be one or two others) that are trying to get its citizens out and to provide a pathway for family members to come to Canada.**

I have received many calls and emails from Davenport residents who are concerned for the safety of Mansour Shouman. Based on his social media accounts, it appears that Mr. Shouman was able to leave Gaza and is now safe.

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2. **Two-state solution.** Prime Minister Trudeau believes, as do I, that this is the only solution to long-standing peace and security for Israel, for Palestine and for the Middle East.

It's troubling, but not surprising, that Prime Minister Netanyahu and the leaders of Hamas are both rejecting the idea of a two-state solution. Canada, the EU and the US have all made it clear that we disagree and that a two-state solution is what we are pushing for.

It is imperative that Canada moves decisively with its international partners to begin to identify pathways toward peace and to start the hard work of creating a framework for a workable two-state solution. There are many credible actors in the Middle East that can take on this leadership and help find a successful path forward.

3. **Humanitarian aid.** Canada is among the top donors to Gaza in terms of per capita funding, having given a total of \$100 million in humanitarian assistance.

Canada is also focused on getting the essentials of life and medical supplies into Gaza. We must continue these efforts. The situation on the ground is heartbreaking. Israel, Egypt and Hamas, who all have certain controls at the Rafah border, must allow aid in and for it to get to innocent Palestinians who are trapped in Gaza.

Many of you have called or written to me regarding our government's cut to UNRWA's funding, and have asked where I stand on this issue. This pause in funding (which occurred due to the accusation that several UNRWA staff members were involved in Hamas' October 7th attack on Israel) is temporary. As UNRWA has terminated the contracts of the accused, I believe that our government should look into **reinstating funding** as soon as possible, while the UN's Office for Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) investigates these claims. Anyone who is found to have been involved in the October 7th attack must be held accountable. However, innocent Palestinian civilians cannot continue to be made to pay the price of Hamas' actions. I will be writing to Minister Joly on this matter.

The federal government pledged an additional \$40 million in humanitarian aid, after pausing UNRWA funding, to address urgent needs in the Gaza strip. The funds are being allocated as follows:

- a. World Food Programme: \$16 million
- b. UNICEF: \$6 million
- c. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA): \$5 million
- d. World Health Organization: \$3 million
- e. International Committee of the Red Cross \$3 million
- f. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) \$2 million

Additionally, the Canadian government "[will begin airdropping aid into Gaza within the next week.](#)"

Many of you have asked where I stand on a number of issues. See below for my thoughts:

On an export ban on all arms: Davenport residents have been asking me since before Christmas to push for Canada to implement an arms embargo against Israel.

On Feb 23, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) released a [statement](#) saying that arms exports to Israel **must stop immediately**, as “[a]ny transfer of weapons or ammunition to Israel that would be used in Gaza is likely to violate international humanitarian law.” I **support** their call for an arms embargo.

On sanctions: Our federal government has not taken an official position on this yet. This is a complex and contentious issue involving many considerations. It is part of an ongoing international debate and does not yet have a simple or universally accepted solution. I also continue to think about this issue. [I know that the US sanctioned four Israeli settlers on the West Bank.](#)

On cutting diplomatic ties: Ideologically, our federal Liberal government does not believe in cutting ties with any national government. I agree with this.

We want to be able to directly communicate (good or bad info) with governments (we like or don't like) around the world directly. It is important for Canada to have an ambassador on the ground with staff to get first-hand information and news. We do not want to go through another country to communicate on our behalf or to pass along information—it makes us less effective.

Sustainable Ceasefire now.

I stand by the [joint statement](#) put out on February 14th by the Prime Ministers of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, calling for a sustainable ceasefire.

I would add one major ask: **that Israel change how they are going after Hamas in Gaza because their current approach has not worked and has resulted in the killing of too many innocent lives and the leveling of too much of Gaza. It is an approach that is unacceptable.**

It is also important to note that the Benjamin Netanyahu War Cabinet is currently split – and [their division is now public.](#)

- Former military chief Gadi Eisenkot has formally called for general elections within months and has publicly declared that the Israeli government is lying about its offensive against Hamas.
- Eisenkot has also called for a stop to the fighting for a significant time and an immediate release of the rest of the October 7 hostages.
- Senior Israeli leadership is stepping up to support a stop to the fighting and the immediate release of hostages.
- And it's important to note that Hamas continues to embed itself among civilians and fire rockets into Israel (north and south)

South Africa Case before International Court of Justice

The international court of justice, the top court of the UN, ordered Israel on February 2nd to take measures to prevent and punish direct incitement of genocide in its war in Gaza, and to refrain from any acts that could fall under the genocide convention. Israel must report to the court

within a month on what it's doing to uphold the order. **The decision is legally binding, and I accept the decision.**

[Mexico and Chile have also asked the International Criminal Court](#) (ICC) to investigate possible war crimes by officials of both Hamas on October 7 and by officials of Israel in their invasion of Gaza.

Note that the ICJ and the ICC are very different courts. The ICJ settles legal disputes between **states**. It does not have jurisdiction over individuals or non-state entities. Therefore, Hamas, as a non-state entity, cannot be brought before the ICJ. The ICC can hear cases against individuals but not states. I will also accept all decisions of the ICC.

It is important to remind ourselves that Canada has said from the very beginning that all wars have rules and must be conducted according to international law.

Racism and discrimination are completely unacceptable.

The rapid rise of Anti-Semitism in our community, in our city, and in our country has been shocking. I cannot stress enough how completely unacceptable this is.

There are members of the Davenport Jewish community who have never experienced discrimination in Canada until recently. They are now, for the first time in their lives, afraid for their safety and security in the community that they have always called home.

Discrimination against Arab, Muslim and Palestinian communities is also on the rise. In particular, I am hearing that in a number of different professions, if someone supports or *follows* a pro-Palestinian group online, they are no longer considered for the job they have applied for. This is equally unacceptable.

Davenport: Let's find ways to have debate and dialogue and be alright if we disagree with each other. The issues in the Middle East are complex and go back decades if not centuries. There are experts within our riding – but the vast majority are not experts, and for those who decide to engage on this issue, they are trying to find their way via the multiple sources that are out there – some more accurate than others.

I've been asked to help with the work to try to start healing the divisions within our community. I am happy to help with this work and would be grateful if you could email me if you too would like to be part of these efforts in the coming weeks and months.

My best regards,



Julie Dzerowicz
Member of Parliament, Davenport