

Canada Must Act Against Israeli Settlement Expansion

By [Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East](#)
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CJPME

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Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) is urging the Canadian government to take immediate action against Israel's decision to authorize nine new illegal settlements and construct ten thousand new settler units in the occupied West Bank. On February 14, Canada's foreign affairs minister Mélanie Joly [issued](#) a statement saying that Canada is "concerned" by Israel's decision and that it "strongly opposes the expansion of settlements." This followed similar statements from the United States and several European countries. However, CJPME believes that concrete action is necessary to stop Israel's settlement plans, including sanctions against the Israeli officials who are responsible.

"As Israel openly plans to commit war crimes, Canada's words of 'concern' are simply not enough," said Michael Bueckert, Vice President of CJPME. "To stop Israel's settlement expansion, Canada must ban all trade with Israel's illegal settlements and sanction the war criminals in Israel's far-right government," added Bueckert.

CJPME notes that Israel's far-right government has vowed not to listen to criticism over its settlement plans. In response to statements of concern from Canada, the US, and European countries, Israel's National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, leader of the extremist Jewish Power party, [said](#) that "nine settlements are nice but it's still not enough, we want much more," and asserted that "this is our mission, this is our doctrine." At the end of last year, Israel's governing coalition published a statement of principles which [expressed](#) blatantly supremacist views, claiming that "the Jewish people have an exclusive and inalienable right to all parts of the Land of Israel," including the occupied Palestinian territory (OPT). The coalition has also promised to expand Jewish settlements in all areas under its control and is committed to advancing the "application of sovereignty" – a euphemism for [annexation](#) – over the occupied West Bank.

Since 1967, Israel has established at least 132 settlements on stolen Palestinian land [according](#) to the Israeli NGO Peace Now. Every settlement is illegal under international law,

as the Fourth Geneva Convention strictly prohibits Israel as an occupying power from transferring its civilian population into occupied territory. These settlements are in direct violation of the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, therefore constituting a [war crime](#). Meanwhile, Canada extends preferential benefits to illegal settler businesses under the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA), providing an economic incentive for ongoing illegal settlement activity. CJPME urges Canada to end its complicity by banning trade with Israel's settlements and to impose targeted sanctions on Israeli officials responsible for settlement policy. CJPME has also been calling on the Canadian government to respond to the rise of Israel's far-right government by [boycotting](#) diplomatic relations and [expelling](#) Israel's ambassador.

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Featured image: A graffiti of Naji al-Ali's Handala on the West Bank separation wall

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