

Canada Must Support Norway's Request for ICJ Opinion on Israel's Starvation of Gaza

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 vote in support of [Norway's resolution](#) at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), which would request the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to render an urgent advisory opinion on Israel's starvation policies in Gaza. The resolution, which is scheduled for a vote on Thursday, specifically requests an ICJ opinion on Israel's obligations as an occupying power and UN member to facilitate humanitarian access in Gaza. CJPME is encouraged that Canada today voted "Yes" on a preliminary motion at the UN's Fifth Committee to [approve](#) the ICJ's budget, and hopes this logically translates into support for the main resolution at the plenary.

"Israel's decision to shut down the UN aid agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) is a central pillar of its genocidal campaign of starvation. Canada must support the request by Norway, a NATO ally, to ask the ICJ for clear answers on Israel's legal responsibilities as an occupying power. This would finally empower the international community to hold Israel's genocidal regime accountable for the starvation of Gaza," said Michael Bueckert, Vice President of CJPME.

Norway's [resolution](#) would ask the ICJ for an opinion on "the obligations of Israel, as an occupying Power and as a member of the United Nations [...] to ensure and facilitate the unhindered provision of urgently needed supplies essential to the survival of the Palestinian civilian population as well as of basic services and humanitarian and development assistance[.]" The resolution is an urgent response to Israel's latest legislative measures which [threaten to dismantle UNRWA](#), often described as the backbone of the humanitarian response in Gaza. It also follows the [arrest warrants](#) by the International Criminal Court (ICC) against Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and former defence minister Gallant for using starvation as a weapon of war and deliberately creating "conditions of life calculated to bring about the destruction of part of the civilian population in Gaza."

CJPME is concerned that Canada may decline to support Norway's resolution, as the Trudeau government has opposed all previous initiatives to go to the ICJ or ICC on matters related to Israel. However, CJPME notes that the current resolution is consistent with other motions supported by Canada this year, including in defence of UNRWA. Canada also voted "Yes" today at the Fifth Committee to [approve the budget](#) for the ICJ advisory opinion, which hopefully indicates that Canada intends to support the main request on Thursday.

CJPME is pleased to note that Canada has taken a more justice-oriented approach in voting on UN resolutions related to Palestine-Israel this year. Whereas since 2011 Canada has been

voting “No” on nearly every resolution related to Palestinian human rights, this year [Canada has finally shifted in approach](#) by voting “Yes” on a majority of relevant resolutions.

“After years of siding with Israel on the world stage, Canada’s more principles-oriented approach to supporting Palestinian human rights at the UN is very welcome. However, Norway’s request to go to the ICJ will be the real test for this government, as Trudeau must decide if he will support a motion with actual legal teeth, not just symbolic importance,” Bueckert added.

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