

Criminalization of Samidoun (Palestine Prisoner Solidarity) in Canada. Attack on the Palestine Solidarity Movement

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

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CJPME

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In a [letter sent today](#) to **Public Safety Minister Dominic LeBlanc**, *Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME)* urges the Canadian government to retract the inclusion of Samidoun (Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network) from the Public Safety Canada terrorist entities list. CJPME challenges Canada's lack of evidence to support the arbitrary designation against Samidoun, and expresses concerns that Canada appears to be cracking down on what is essentially political speech. [You can read the full letter here.](#)

“Instead of alleging participation in terrorist activity, Canada’s listing of Samidoun takes aim at its political activity, including its advocacy on behalf of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli detention,” says Michael Bueckert, Vice President of CJPME. [More than 10,000 Palestinians](#) are held in Israeli occupation jails, with most of them conditions of administrative detention, subject to torture and denied due process, without charges or trial. “We are deeply concerned that the claims against Samidoun will be weaponized to attack and endanger other participants in the Palestinian solidarity movement who have nothing to do with them, or otherwise discourage ordinary people from getting involved. This action appears designed to weaken the pro-Palestine movement itself by painting supporters of Palestine as terrorists,” said Bueckert.

CJPME’s letter echoes the [International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group \(ICLMG\)](#) in criticizing the structural flaws in Canada’s politicized terrorist listing system, and notes the clear overrepresentation of Palestinian, Muslim, and Arab organizations on the list. In particular, the letter calls into question the basis for listing Samidoun as a terrorist entity, noting that Canada has declined to accuse the organization of engaging in terrorist activities nor to provide claims of material ties with listed organizations. In the absence of substantive allegations of terrorist activity, CJPME believes that the group was criminalized for political activities and behaviour that may be interpreted as offensive or distasteful, but which fall far short of terrorism.

“Since the very start of Israel’s genocide on Gaza, pro-Israel organizations have slandered Palestine solidarity activists as supporters of terrorism,” said Alex Paterson, Senior Director of Strategy and Parliamentary Affairs for CJPME. “The Trudeau government, caving to partisan pearl-clutching from the Poilievre team, unfortunately took the bait on this defamation. Branding Samidoun as terrorists is a massive overreaction and raises the spectre of increasing repression of Palestinian solidarity under a Conservative government.”

CJPME's letter recommends that the Canadian government retract the terror designation against Samidoun and overhaul the entire terrorist entity listing system. CJPME maintains that any alleged criminal activity should be pursued through the criminal justice system, instead of relying on an opaque and politicized terror listing process. Further, CJPME urges Minister Leblanc to commit that Canadians will not be criminalized for engaging in advocacy for Palestinians, and to uphold the Charter rights and safety of the Palestinian solidarity movement in Canada.

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