

Canada Sanctions on Extremist Settlers Give Israeli Government a Pass

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) welcomes Canada's belated [imposition of sanctions](#) on four extremist Israeli settlers, but warns that this narrow approach to state-settler violence fails to address the enabling role of the Israeli government. For months, Canada has warned that settler terrorism has the support of Israeli leaders and is often carried out with the protection or even participation of Israeli soldiers. CJPME continues to urge Canada to widen its list of targeted individuals to include Israeli officials responsible for settler violence, including far-right **National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir**, and to recognize the Israeli government as a state sponsor of terror under the State Immunity Act.*

"While today's sanctions set an important precedent that Canada can use economic measures to address Israeli violence against Palestinians, it totally fails to address the core of the problem. By narrowly focusing on a few individuals and failing to include any Israeli leaders in its list, Canada entirely sidesteps the complicity of Israeli leaders and the Israeli government," said Michael Bueckert, Vice President of CJPME. "Years of evidence demonstrate that Israeli settler violence is a form of state-sponsored terrorism. Canada must sanction *all* Israeli officials responsible for supporting and enabling these crimes, starting with National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir," added Bueckert.

Foreign Affairs Minister Mélanie Joly announced today that Canada was imposing [sanctions](#) against four extremist Israeli settlers under the *Special Economic Measures Act*, which prohibits Canadians from dealing in property with them and bans them from Canada. Minister Joly first announced that she was "looking into" the possibility of sanctions nearly four months ago. CJPME wrote to Minister Joly in December [urging](#) her to hold settler

individuals and Israeli officials equally responsible. For years, Canadian human rights groups like CJPME have entreated the Canadian government to pressure Israel to cease and reverse illegal settlement activity with concrete political, diplomatic, and economic measures.

Just earlier today, CJPME released a [comprehensive policy brief](#) urging the Trudeau government to take a 'whole-of-government' approach to combatting Canada's complicity in Israel's settlement enterprise, which includes but is not limited to the issue of settler violence. Among its [19 policy recommendations](#), which fall under seven different ministerial portfolios, CJPME is urging Canada to

- 1) Impose economic sanctions on the Israeli settlement economy, including any individuals and entities involved in Israel's illegal occupation and attempted annexation of East Jerusalem, Gaza and the West Bank;
- 2) Recognize the Israeli government as a state sponsor of terror under the State Immunity Act; and
- 3) Impose individual sanctions on all Israeli government officials involved in and supporting settlements and settler social movements, including targeted sanctions on **Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich and National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir**.

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