

**POSITION      THE ANNAPOLIS PROCESS**  
**PAPER:        FOR PALESTINE-ISRAEL**




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**Policy Recommendations for Canada**

The following is a policy recommendation for Canada as negotiations following the Annapolis conference of November, 2007 get under way.

- A. Canada needs to support negotiations that promote a just resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "Peace is not the absence of violence, but the presence of justice." Annapolis contains a framework for a just resolution to the conflict – notably its built-in dependency to the 2003 Road Map Peace Plan. Canada must encourage negotiations which deal with the source issues causing violence and unrest in the conflict.
- B. Canada must encourage an inclusive process through Annapolis. The Annapolis process is tightly linked to the situation on the ground, including Hamas' control of Gaza. Canada must encourage the parties, and its Western partners to try to constructively engage Hamas, Gaza and the Arab world to enhance prospects for success with Annapolis.
- C. Canada must support the Annapolis process through meaningful aid for the PA, Gaza and refugees. Canada has pledged \$300 million (over three years) to the PA as part of the Paris "Pledging Conference" on Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>. Nevertheless, to the previous two points, Canada must consider the linkage between its aid, and the need for Palestinians to see improvement on the ground *everywhere* to ensure real progress.
- D. Canada should call on both Israel and Palestinian militants to respect international humanitarian law. Targeting of civilians by any warring party is strictly forbidden under international law. Hostage taking by Palestinian militants and Israel (e.g. Hamas legislators) is a war crime. Israeli air strikes, assassinations, invasions and artillery shelling of Palestinian homes and civilian areas must stop, as should the launching of rockets against Israeli border towns by Palestinian armed groups.

**A: Canada needs to support negotiations for a just resolution**

1. Canada must keep in mind that Israel is the illegal occupier of Palestine, and not vice versa. It is quite paradoxical that Canada has of recent favoured Israeli "security" concerns over the Palestinian security, legal and humanitarian concerns. Israel is, in fact, the 40-year occupier of Palestinian land, against international law. Israeli violence is state-sponsored, and results in casualties usually about 10 times that which are sustained by Israelis from independent Palestinian militant groups. Ultimately, Canada must press for negotiations which speak to the core injustices.
2. Canada must vigorously condemn actions which undermine the success of the negotiations. On the very day that the real negotiations were to start, Israel announced plans to expand its Jewish-only colonies in Palestinian territory. Other similar plans were unveiled weeks later. Canada must loudly condemn such actions which undermine all that Annapolis (and the Road Map) stood for. Similarly, Canada should condemn violent acts against civilians committed on both sides.
3. Canada must push each side for tangible changes on the ground. Past negotiations efforts have always deferred *real* decisions to subsequent phases that are never reached, which have always hindered chances for success. Canada must therefore pressure Israel to implement concrete concessions early, e.g. truly freeze/reverse its colony/outpost growth; loosen controls on movement and access. Canada should also pressure the PA to reign in militant violence. (To this last point, Canada must encourage Israel to be realistic about the PA's ability to clamp down on militant activity, given that Hamas is in civil control in Gaza, and Israel with its occupation was never able to fully stop militant violence.)
4. Canada must push for a credible monitoring mechanism. Given ongoing violence and the typical disrespect for past and ongoing negotiations and accords, Canada must insist that the US (or other actor) monitor negotiations and progress on the ground, and hold parties accountable for violations.

## **B: Canada must encourage an inclusive process through Annapolis**

1. Canada must help its partners realize that Hamas and Gaza are unavoidable partners to the process. Without Hamas and Gaza, Palestinians may wonder what and who Abbas is negotiating on behalf of. Canada must remind players that Abbas alone cannot ensure a ceasefire, or other guarantees. Canada and its Western partners must encourage broader inclusive representation for the Palestinians, along the lines of the Unity Government of 2007.
2. Canada must position Israeli collective punishment in Gaza as highly counterproductive to Annapolis. There is no precedent to indicate that the continued Israeli closure of Gaza will cow Hamas. Instead, as indicated since June, such pressure will likely cause violence to escalate. A ceasefire in Gaza and a loosening of Israeli pressure, on the other hand, would give Hamas a stake in the growing calm and reduce the likelihood that Hamas would try to scuttle negotiations.
3. Canada must encourage Arab-world involvement to improve the chances of success. Palestinian compromises will be made more acceptable and palatable if they are supported by other Arab leaders. Similarly, by linking normalization with the Arab world to Israeli concessions on the ground, Israel will be more inclined to make substantive compromises.

## **C: Canada must support Annapolis through a meaningful aid package**

1. To get value for its aid money, Canada must insist that Israel loosen controls on movement and access. The PA, as well as economic institutions like the World Bank forecast very modest growth (only 6 percent over 3 years) for a rejuvenated Palestine if Israel does not relax its oppressive controls on movement in the West Bank and Gaza. Canada and its Western partners must insist that Israel take such measures, and encourage the improvements on the ground (and ultimately success in the Annapolis negotiations) as suggested above.
2. Canada must respond to the UNRWA Emergency Appeal for 2008. Canada has traditionally been a strong historic contributor to the needs of UNRWA, the UN organization responsible for the humanitarian support of the millions of Palestinian refugees in the Middle East. Because of Israel's brutal treatment of Palestinians, especially in Gaza, UNRWA's needs exceed its means. Palestinian refugees typically suffer from much greater poverty than the general population, and Canada must consider a generous donation to UNRWA to address the dire needs under the current circumstances.
3. In allocating its international aid, Canada must apply principles of impartiality, neutrality and humanity. Both morally, and under international aid norms, withholding humanitarian or development aid because of the Palestinian people's election choices (or because of their current civil authority) violates moral principles of impartiality, neutrality, and humanity.

## **D: Canada must insist that warring parties respect international law**

1. Respect for "law in war" cannot be dismissed with self-justifying reasons. In war, all parties presume to hold the moral high ground. International humanitarian law makes no judgement on which side is right or wrong. Rather, it simply sets limits to the brutality and civilian death and damage tolerated in war. This applies regardless of questions of "who started it," or "who's wrong," and similar accusations often advanced by some. Under international law (e.g. the Fourth Geneva Convention), there is no justification for the reckless killing of civilians, collective punishment, or the destruction of civilian infrastructure.
2. Canada must hold equal expectations of both the PA and Israel in conduct and negotiations. The PA must recognize Israel, renounce violence, and respect previous accords. In the same way, Israel must 1) respect the territorial integrity of the West Bank and Gaza as required under Oslo and the Road Map Peace Plan; 2) renounce artillery strikes, aerial bombardment, assassinations, and other violence imposed on Palestinians; 3) Israel must transfer customs revenues to the PA as required under the Paris Protocols.
3. Canada must call for respect for all applicable UN resolutions. The history of UN resolutions approved for the conflict (e.g. 194, 242, 338, etc.) would resolve the crisis if respected.