Does Canada belong to a "moral majority" in international forums?

No. To the contrary, Canada has increasingly isolated itself on the short side of innumerable one-sided votes. The following are examples from among dozens which occur each year in international forums:

- Mar. 2006. Economic and Social Council, Commission on the Status of Women, resolution (E/CN.6/2006/L.4) on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women. Canada and US alone oppose; 41 countries (including Belgium, Germany, Iceland, Japan, Netherlands, Russia, UK) support.
- Sept. 2006. Canada vetoes a resolution supported by all 55 other members of the Francophonie summit that condemns Israel's assault on Lebanon one month earlier. [1]
- Jan. 2009. UN Human Rights Council resolution condemning Israel's violent 22-day assault on Gaza. Canada alone opposes; 45 support and one abstains. [2]
- Dec. 2009. UN General Assembly resolution (64/94, 2009) on Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Canada and 8 others oppose; 162 support. Those joining Canada in opposition were the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Panama, Israel, United States, and Australia.
- Dec. 2009. UN General Assembly resolution (64/195, 2009) asking Israel to provide compensation to Lebanon for an oil slick caused by Israel's 2006 bombing of oil storage tanks. Canada one of 8 who oppose; 164 support.
- Dec. 2009. UN General Assembly resolution (64/150, 2009) calling for the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. Canada abstains; only 6 countries oppose; 176 support.
- Feb. 2010. UN General Assembly resolution (64/10, 2010) calling for Israel and Hamas to investigate war crimes alleged by the Goldstone Report. Canada opposes with six others (Israel, Micronesia, Nauru, Panama, Macedonia, and the United States); 98 support.

What are examples of Canada's pro-Israel Middle East policy?

The following are several examples of some of the different ways in which Canada has been conspicuously unbalanced in its approach to Israel and the Middle East in recent years.

- Jul.-Aug. 2006. For the length of Israel's war on Lebanon, Canada refuses to call for a ceasefire, despite an emergency vote by the Foreign Affairs Committee compelling it to do so.
- Jan. 2008. "By refusing to condemn the building [of illegal colonies in East Jerusalem] at Harhoma, Mr. Bernier appeared to have made Canadian foreign policy the most pro-Israeli in the world. Last week, even the United States, usually Israel's staunchest ally, slammed the new construction here." [3]
- Feb. 2008. Canada refuses to call Israel to accountability after a published Canadian Forces inquiry into the death of Canadian peacekeeper finds Israel wholly responsible. [4]
- Jul. 2009. Canada refuses to protest Israel's new discriminatory visa policy toward Canadians of Middle East origin, and towards Jewish Canadians doing human rights work in the West Bank. The US and others protest vigorously against similar mistreatment of their citizens. [5] [6]
- Jan. 2009. Canada refuses to push for a ceasefire during Israel's war on Gaza.
- Sept. 2009. Canada tries to block a vote at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on a resolution to have Israel's nuclear facilities inspected.

What are examples of int'l reaction to Canada's pro-Israel policy?

Actions on the international stage – whether statements, votes, resolutions, commitments, etc. – are watched closely. Below are some international reactions some of Canada's shift in international posture.

- "It's hard to find a country friendlier to Israel than Canada these days. Members of both the coalition and the opposition are loyal friends to us […] Canada is so friendly that there was no need to convince or explain anything to anyone." Israel's Foreign Minister, Avigdor Lieberman, after meeting with Liberal and Conservative leaders in July, 2009 [7]
- "When Canada says that the position of the great majority of nations is not helpful, well it is saying it is not accepting the will of the majority, and it is not accepting the role of the UN in upholding international law," Palestinian Observer to the UN, Riyad Mansour. [8]
- "There is a feeling on the Emirati side that it deals positively with Western countries in the framework of judiciary agreements signed with them. But when it requests something from Western states in this framework of agreements, their relationship with Israel takes priority," asserted Ibrahim Khayat, a UAE-based strategic affairs expert following an incident where Canada had arrested a suspect in an Israel-orchestrated assassination in the UAE. [9]
- "I don't think it's good for the [Francophonie]. […] It's too bad the Bucharest summit didn't finish on a more constructive note." Lebanon's culture minister Tarek Mitri, following Canada's veto of a Francophonie resolution condemning Israel's 2006 attack on Lebanon. [10]
- "Peace and nuclear weapons are two enemies – there is no cohabitation," said Ramzy Ramzy, head of the Egyptian delegation to an IAEA meeting in 2006, following a "no action" motion by Canada to block a resolution calling Israel's nuclear capability a regional threat, and calling on Israel to join the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty.

How does Canada officially justify its isolated positions?

In recent years, Canada has chosen to depart from a principles-based foreign policy, in favour of a rhetoric-based position-taking. While rhetoric can sometimes be compelling, it is often a mechanism used to justify inaction, or to excuse a particular bias. Some examples:

- "Canada's representative reiterated concern over the disproportionate focus on one situation and on one party within that situation. The focus, he said, should instead be on fostering an atmosphere for a negotiated two-State solution." [11]
- "In Canada's view, any action in the General Assembly on the question of the barrier [i.e. Israel's wall] should contribute to advancing a just, lasting and negotiated settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict." (A/ES-10/PV.31, Dec. 15, 2006)
- "Mr. MEYER (Canada), speaking in explanation of vote […] said that the General Assembly, and not the Human Rights Council, was the appropriate forum to address the question of Israeli settlements." [12]
- "Canada's representative said he had consistently supported greater international attention to address the situation of women in armed conflict, including Palestinian women. […] Nevertheless, he had voted against the resolution […] because he had consistently called for more balance in resolutions on the Israeli-Palestinian issue." [13]

As long as its policy is based on subjective pretexts (e.g. "balance," "helpfulness," "focus," etc.), and not principles (e.g. international law), Canada will continue to be marginalized on the international scene.

[1] *"Harper blocks Lebanon resolution,"* Canwest News Service, Sept. 29, 2006

[2] *"Special Session of Human Rights Council adopts resolution on grave human rights violations in Gaza Strip,"* Human Rights Council, 12 Jan., 2009

[3] MacKinnon, Mark, *"Bernier's silence raises questions,"* The Globe and Mail, Jan. 14, 2008

[4] *"Board of Inquiry Minutes of Proceedings,"* Canadian Expeditionary Force Command / Canadian Forces, Date of Convention: Sept. 13, 2006, Date of Issuance: Feb. 1, 2008, p. 20

[5] *"Why is Israel Limiting Movement of Palestinian-Canadian Businessman?"* Aug 19 2009. Hass, Haaretz.com

[6] *"Israel Bars Some Foreign Academics Who Teach in the West Bank"* Sept. 3, 2009. Kalman, The Chronicle of Higher Education.

[7] *"Did Canada's support for Israel cost it a seat on UN Security Council?,"* Haaretz, Oct. 17, 2010

[8] *"Canada issues blunt message to UN over Mideast peace,"* Canwest News Service, Dec. 1, 2006

[9] Keyrouz, Wissam, *"UAE-Canada relations hit recent rocky patches,"* Middle East Online, Oct. 20, 2010

[10] *"Harper blocks Lebanon resolution,"* Canwest News Service, Sept. 29, 2006

[11] *"Concluding its work for session, Fourth Committee approves 11 more drafts…,"* General Assembly, DPI, Nov. 19, 2009.

[12] *"Second session, Summary Record of the 32nd Meeting"* Human Rights Council, Nov. 27, 2009.

[13] *"UN Women's Commission adopts texts addressing HIV/AIDS, Women Hostages, Situation of Palestinian Women, as it suspends Fiftieth Session,"* Economic and Social Council, Commission on the Status of Women, DPI, Mar. 10, 2006