

CJPME's Vote 2019 Elections Guide

« Vote 2019 » Guide électoral de CJPME



A Guide to Canadian Federal Parties' Positions on the Middle East
Guide sur la position des partis fédéraux canadiens à propos du Moyen-Orient

*Assembled by Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East
Préparé par Canadiens pour la justice et la paix au Moyen-Orient*

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Preface

Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) is pleased to provide the present guide on Canadian Federal parties' positions on the Middle East. While much has happened since the last Canadian Federal elections in 2015, CJPME has done its best to evaluate and qualify each party's response to thirteen core Middle East issues.

CJPME is a grassroots, secular, non-partisan organization working to empower Canadians of all backgrounds to promote justice, development and peace in the Middle East. We provide this document so that you – a Canadian citizen or resident – can be better informed of the importance and implications of your vote in the 2019 Federal election.

There were other topics that CJPME wished to address in this guide, but resource limitations have prevented us from doing so. If you appreciate this guide, we invite you to donate to our work at www.cjpme.org/donate to enable us to expand our ability to do these types of analyses.

CJPME's three policy pillars are 1) respect for international law; 2) the belief that all parties in a conflict should be held to the same standard; and 3) the belief that violence is not a solution. For more information about CJPME, please visit its website at www.cjpme.org.

We know that Middle East-related issues are not your only concerns, but we believe that you will want to take them into consideration when deciding whom you will support. In some ridings, the voting in the 2015 election was very close. Our hope is that this election guide will encourage you to get vocal, get organised and make a difference.

Préface

Canadiens pour la paix et la justice au Moyen-Orient (CJPMO) est heureuse de vous présenter ce guide électoral portant sur les positions adoptées par les partis fédéraux canadiens sur le Moyen-Orient. Beaucoup d'eau a coulé sous les ponts depuis les élections fédérales de 2015, ce qui n'a pas empêché CJPMO d'établir 13 enjeux clés relativement au Moyen-Orient et d'évaluer les positions prônées par chacun des partis vis-à-vis de ceux-ci.

CJPMO est une organisation de terrain non-partisane et séculière visant à donner aux Canadiens de tous horizons les moyens de promouvoir la justice, le développement et la paix au Moyen-Orient. Nous offrons ce document afin que vous – en tant que citoyen ou résident canadien – puissiez être bien informés sur l'importance et sur l'impact de votre vote lors de l'élection fédérale 2019.

Bien qu'il y ait d'autres sujets que nous aurions aimé aborder dans ce présent guide, un manque de ressources nous a empêchés de le faire. Si vous appréciez ce guide, nous vous invitons à faire un don pour appuyer notre travail au www.cjpme.org/donate et nous permettre de faire davantage de ce type d'analyses.

Les trois principes de la politique de CJPMO sont 1) le respect du droit international; 2) la croyance que toutes les parties dans un conflit devraient être jugées selon la même norme, et 3) la croyance que la violence n'est pas une solution. Pour plus de renseignements sur CJPMO, visitez son site Web au www.cjpme.org.

Nous savons que les enjeux liés au Moyen-Orient ne sont pas votre seule préoccupation, mais que vous voudrez les prendre en considération lorsqu'il s'agira de décider à qui vous donnerez votre appui. Dans certaines circonscriptions, le vote lors de l'élection de 2015 était très serré. Nous espérons que ce guide électoral vous encouragera à vous faire entendre, à vous organiser et à contribuer au changement.

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Summary Ratings / Sommaire des notations	Conservatives <i>Conservateurs</i>	NDP <i>NPD</i>	Liberals <i>Libéraux</i>	Bloc Québécois	Greens <i>Verts</i>
1. The BDS Movement Le mouvement BDS	F	B	F	B-	A-
2. Attitude Towards Arms Control L'attitude envers le contrôle des armes	F	A	C	B+	A-
3. Aid to Palestinian Refugees Soutien aux réfugiés palestiniens	D	A-	B+	n/a – n.d.	n/a – n.d.
4. Israel's Illegal Settlements Les colonies illégales d'Israël	F	B+	C-	B	B+
5. Israel's Killing of Protesters in Gaza L'exécution par Israël de civils palestiniens à Gaza	D	B+	C+	n/a – n.d.	A
6. Response to Saudi human rights abuses Réponse aux abus saoudiens	F	A	D	n/a – n.d.	A-
7. Incarceration of Palestinian Children L'incarcération des enfants palestiniens par Israël	F	A-	C-	B	B+
8. Islamophobia L'islamophobie	F	A	B	F	B-
9. Trump's pro-Israel Actions Les actions de Trump concernant Israël	F	A-	B-	n/a – n.d.	B
10. The Yemen Crisis La crise au Yémen	F	A	D-	B+	B+
11. Palestine-Israel: Conflict and Negotiations Palestine-Israël: Conflit et négociations	F	B	C-	A-	B+
12. Response to Egypt's Human Rights Abuses Réponse aux abus de l'Égypte	D	B	D	n/a – n.d.	n/a – n.d.
13. Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement L'accord de libre-échange Canada-Israël	F	A-	F	B	C
CJPME Summary Evaluation Résumé de l'évaluation de CJPME	F	A-	C-	B	B+

CJPME Overview Comments

CJPMO: Commentaires généraux

Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) has evaluated each of the Canadian parties, on each of the target topics, according to certain criteria. These criteria involve, foremost, CJPME's core policy pillars: 1) support for international law; 2) an equal legal standard for all; and 3) a belief that violence doesn't lead to solutions. In addition to the above three criteria, there are a few other criteria which have been brought to bear where appropriate in this analysis, including: 4) humanitarian concern; 5) support for representative governance; and 6) sense of urgency in responding to crises. There is also the underlying assumption in this Guide that Canada is a wealthy and privileged nation, and that Canada has a responsibility to contribute constructively (and financially) to humanitarian, political and diplomatic crises around the world.

This Guide has its limitations. CJPME has limited resources to conduct such analysis. As such, CJPME asks for indulgence with regards to 1) potential oversights in its analysis; and 2) the limited number of topics we were able to address.

While certain trends are clear, CJPME does *not* offer this Guide as a recipe book for voting. Individual Canadian voters must decide how to vote based on many factors, especially including the specifics of their local riding and candidates. Nevertheless, CJPME hopes that this Guide will provide strong overall guidance on how parties have responded to key Middle East crises of the past few years, and how these same parties might respond in the future. And this Guide *should be* a handbook to help voters challenge their representatives in the months and years ahead, to help ensure that the Middle East is not forever a region of strife and bloodshed.

Canadiens pour la justice et la paix au Moyen-Orient (CJPMO) a évalué chacun des partis canadiens, sur chacun des enjeux clés, en fonction de certains critères. Ces critères reposent avant tout sur les principes politiques fondamentaux de CJPMO : 1) le respect du droit international, 2) le statut égal aux yeux de la loi pour tous, 3) la conviction que la violence n'est pas une solution. De plus, d'autres critères jugés appropriés pour cette analyse ont été ajoutés, comme : 4) un souci humanitaire, 5) un appui envers la démocratie représentative, et 6) un sentiment d'urgence à répondre à une crise. Ce guide prend aussi sur soi que le Canada est une nation privilégiée et fortunée qui a comme responsabilité de contribuer de manière constructive (et financière) aux crises humanitaires, politiques et diplomatiques qui sévissent dans le monde.






Les limitations de ce guide s'expliquent par les ressources comptées dont bénéficie CJPMO pour la mise en œuvre de telles analyses. C'est pourquoi CJPMO demande à ses lecteurs de faire preuve d'indulgence en ce qui a trait 1) aux omissions potentielles dans son analyse et 2) à la quantité limitée de sujets qui ont pu être couverts.

Même si certaines tendances sont décelables, CJPMO n'offre *pas* ce guide à titre de manuel d'emploi pour voter. Les électeurs canadiens doivent prendre en compte plusieurs facteurs lors du vote, comme les particularités de leur circonscription et les candidats présentés. Néanmoins, CJPMO espère que ce guide fournira un bon aperçu des politiques prônées par chacun des partis lors des crises relatives au Moyen-Orient survenues durant les dernières années, et permettra de prédire les lignes de conduite potentielles des partis. La vocation de ce guide est d'être un manuel d'aide aux électeurs pour leur permettre de remettre en questions leurs élus durant les mois et les années à venir. De cette façon, nous nous assurons que le Moyen-Orient ne reste pas une région à feu et à sang.

1 The BDS Movement / Le mouvement BDS

BDS MOVEMENT LE MOUVEMENT BDS

Assessment / Évaluation

 Conservative Party of Canada / Parti conservateur du Canada	F
 New Democratic Party / Nouveau Parti démocratique	B
 Liberal Party of Canada / Parti libéral du Canada	F
 Bloc Québécois	B-
 Green Party of Canada / Parti Vert du Canada	A-

Executive Summary

According to CJPME's research findings, no Canadian political party fully supports BDS, although the reaction and tone vis-à-vis the movement varies somewhat amongst the parties.

The Greens received the highest mark, despite not explicitly endorsing the BDS movement. The Green's official policy on Israel-Palestine does, however, support boycotts, divestment and sanctions against Israel until it respects international law.

The NDP received the next best score, as individual NDP MPs – including NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh – have expressed their willingness to consider economic sanctions against Israel. Nonetheless, the NDP as a party has rejected any type of BDS-related action.

Sommaire

Selon les résultats de recherche de CJPME, aucun parti politique canadien ne supporte entièrement le BDS, bien que la réaction et le ton à l'égard du mouvement variant quelque peu entre les partis.

Les verts ont reçu la meilleure note, bien que n'approuvant pas explicitement le mouvement BDS. La politique du Parti vert sur Israël et la Palestine soutient cependant les boycotts, les désinvestissements et les sanctions contre Israël tant que cette dernière ne respecte pas le droit international.

Le NPD a obtenu la deuxième meilleure note, parce que, à titre individuel, ses députés – incluant le chef du parti Jagmeet Singh – ont exprimé leur volonté d'envisager des sanctions économiques contre Israël. Néanmoins, le NPD,

While the Bloc Québécois (BQ) has not taken an explicit stance on BDS, CJPME was able to find BQ statements supporting the objectives of the BDS movement.

Meanwhile, the Liberal and Conservative positions against BDS are the most extreme, falsely equating the BDS movement to a form of anti-Semitism, and condemning Canadians who support non-violent pressure tactics against Israel.

en tant que parti, a rejeté toute action liée au BDS.

Bien que le Bloc Québécois (BQ) n'ait pris aucune position explicite sur le mouvement BDS, CJPME a retrouvé des déclarations du BQ appuyant les objectifs du mouvement BDS.

Par opposition, les positions libérales et conservatrices sur le BDS sont les plus extrêmes, assimilant faussement le mouvement BDS à une forme d'antisémitisme et condamnant les Canadiens qui soutiennent ces tactiques non violentes pour exercer une pression sur Israël.

Background

In 2005, 170 Palestinian civil society organizations issued a unified call to the international community to initiate Boycott, Divestment and Sanction (BDS) activities against Israel. The BDS movement demands that Israel recognize Palestinians' right to self-determination and that Israel comply with international law and universal principles of human rights. Today, grassroots activism in Canada has contributed significantly to the global BDS campaign, with over 70 Canadian organizations currently working to generate economic pressure on Israel.¹

Despite its popularity within international civil society, the movement has not gained support from the majority of Canada's political parties. Indeed, two of Canada's major political parties have explicitly condemned the BDS movement, with some going as far as labelling it the 'new face of anti-Semitism' because, they argue, it unfairly 'singles out' Israel.

Liberal Position

The Liberal Party's stance against BDS has been most clearly articulated during Trudeau's mandate. Apart from the two Liberal MPs who voted against the Conservatives' anti-BDS motion, and the twelve that abstained from voting, the remainder of the party supported the motion, thus allowing it to pass in the House.²

The Liberal position on BDS is fueled by the same rhetoric perpetuated by the Conservatives, which conflates BDS with anti-Semitism. In November 2018, during his apology for the Canadian Government's failure to accept Jewish refugees into Canada in 1939, Justin Trudeau concluded his statement by condemning BDS as anti-Semitic. When questioned about his stance on the BDS movement at several 2019 Canadian townhalls, Trudeau has repeatedly reiterated this position.³

Even prior to his election, Trudeau had already publicly expressed opposition to the BDS movement. In March 2015, for example, in a talk with university students in Vancouver, Trudeau expressed strong opposition to BDS, accusing the movement of contradicting "Canadian values of respect and openness [when] engaging with each other."⁴ When a vote on divestment took place at Montreal's McGill

University that same month, Trudeau attracted national attention by condemning student organizers. “The BDS movement, like Israeli Apartheid Week, has no place on Canadian campuses,” Trudeau tweeted, “As a @McGillU alum, I’m disappointed. #EnoughIsEnough.”⁵

Thus, although there is no “official” Liberal party policy on BDS, Trudeau’s statements carve out a position not dissimilar from that of the Conservatives.

Conservative Position

Under former Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s leadership, the Conservative government exhibited a highly threatening and intolerant attitude towards BDS activists. For example, in January 2015, Public Safety Minister Steven Blaney addressed the UN General Assembly, stating that “Canada has taken a zero-tolerance approach to anti-Semitism and all forms of discrimination including rhetoric towards Israel, and attempts to delegitimize Israel such as the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement.”⁶ Just four days earlier, Canada’s former Foreign Affairs Minister, John Baird, had signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Israel pledging to combat BDS.

Only a few months after Trudeau’s election, on February 22nd 2016, the Conservatives introduced an anti-BDS motion to the House of Commons. The motion called on the Liberal government “to condemn any and all attempts by Canadian organizations, groups or individuals to promote the BDS movement, both here at home and abroad.”⁷ The entire Conservative caucus voted to condemn Canadians who support BDS. Human rights organizations, such as Amnesty International, vocally opposed this parliamentary motion as a violation of free speech and an attempt to stifle legitimate criticism of Israel. Both inside and outside of the House of Commons, Conservative MPs continue to falsely conflate BDS with anti-Semitism. When introducing the anti-BDS motion, Conservative Member of Parliament Tony Clement stated that the BDS movement is discriminatory, and seeks “to delegitimize and isolate Israel, and quite frankly single Israel out around the world.”⁸ During the motion’s debate, several Conservative MPs called the BDS movement an act of “anti-Semitic racism.”⁹

Under the direction of Andrew Scheer, the Conservative Party has continued to use this anti-BDS rhetoric, actively condemning Canadians who support the movement. Several Conservative MPs, including David Sweet, Kelly McCauley, Michael Cooper, and Erin O’Toole, have continued to smear BDS activists as anti-Semites under Scheer’s leadership.¹⁰

NDP Position

Although the New Democratic Party has no official position on BDS, a series of actions and comments from NDP leaders have shown that the party is unwilling to back the BDS movement. Former NDP leaders Jack Layton and Thomas Mulcair both made comments rejecting the BDS movement,¹¹ with Mulcair going so far as to say that BDS is “exactly the wrong direction we should be going in.”¹² The NDP’s position on BDS under Jagmeet Singh’s leadership has yet to be determined.

While NDP MPs voted in a block against the Conservatives’ anti-BDS motion of February 2016, many NDP MPs positioned their vote as a vote for freedom of speech and civil liberties, rather than a vote in support of BDS and its objectives. Indeed, during a House debate in 2016, NDP MP Hélène Laverdière even stated: “The NDP does not support BDS. We think it detracts from the work of achieving real progress in the region.”¹³

In 2017, prior to his election as leader of the NDP, then-Ontario NDP MPP Jagmeet Singh reacted to a motion in Ontario's legislature condemning BDS by stating: "In a free and democratic society, peaceful advocacy directed toward a government or its policies must never be silenced."¹⁴ Singh tweeted at the time: "I proudly spoke against the anti-#BDS motion & will continue to support the right to dissent."¹⁵ In response to a 2017 joint CJPME-IJV questionnaire asking about his position on BDS, Jagmeet Singh indicated that he was "open to considering the use of sanctions in response to human rights violations."¹⁶

During the NDP's national convention in February 2018, a grassroots initiative supported widely by NDP activists tried introduced a resolution that called for a ban on "settlement products from the Canadian market", and condemned "parliamentary efforts to undermine nonviolent movements seeking a just resolution," including BDS.¹⁷ Even though the resolution had been endorsed by the NDP youth convention and by 25 riding associations, it was deprioritized and placed at the bottom of the list of proposed foreign policy resolutions. Despite widespread support from grassroots activists, the resolution never made it to the plenary floor at the convention.

As exemplified by these various examples, the NDP's attitude toward BDS remains ambiguous. While the party is quick to defend the right to engage in economic pressure tactics, the party has remained quiet on the matter under the leadership of Jagmeet Singh.

Bloc Québécois Position

The Bloc 's (BQ) position on BDS was most pronounced during its response to the Conservatives' anti-BDS motion in February 2016. The BQ voted against the motion, arguing that the BDS movement promotes the legitimate criticism of Israeli policies.¹⁸ The party sought to further justify its decision by drawing a connection between the struggle of Palestinians and Quebecers for sovereignty. CJPME was unable to find any other party statement on BDS.

In all, the BQ positions itself moderately in favour of the BDS movement, but does not take concrete actions to support it.

Green Position

The Green Party of Canada (GPC) approved a resolution to adopt BDS as part of its platform in August, 2016. The resolution was overwhelmingly approved by party members, but leader Elizabeth May was strongly opposed to it. Following the convention, she threatened to resign from her position if the BDS resolution was not repealed.

The initial resolution was modified and ratified in February 2017, with all mention of the BDS movement removed. Nonetheless, the revised "compromise" resolution S16-P013 remains the first and only resolution of a major party in Canada "to call for peaceful sanctions on Israel for its decades-long abuses of Palestinian rights."¹⁹ While the party's position can be confusing because of May's general opposition to BDS, the GPC still "supports only non-violent responses to violence and oppression, including economic measures such as government sanctions, consumer boycotts, institutional divestment, economic sanctions and arms embargoes."²⁰





The current Green Party platform supports a ban on products coming wholly or partly from illegal Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories. It also calls for a renegotiation of the Canada-Israel

Free Trade Agreement, to exclude products from the settlements, and to ensure that the 'Made in Israel' label apply only to those products made entirely in Israel proper. Through its support for economic pressure on Israel, the GPC positively sets itself apart from the other major Canadian parties.

2 Attitude on Arms Control / Attitude envers le contrôle des armes

ATTITUDE TOWARDS ARMS CONTROL ATTITUDE ENVERS LE CONTRÔLE DES ARMES

Assessment / Évaluation

	Conservative Party of Canada / Parti conservateur du Canada	F
	New Democratic Party / Nouveau Parti démocratique	A
	Liberal Party of Canada / Parti libéral du Canada	C
	Bloc Québécois	B+
	Green Party of Canada / Parti Vert du Canada	A-

Executive Summary

Up until this year, Canada was the only country in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) that had not yet signed the international Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The Harper government refused to sign on to the ATT when it first entered into force in 2014. The Conservatives under Andrew Scheer have maintained this same isolationist posture when considering arms exports, and have favoured the economic benefit of arms sales over human rights concerns, even when dealing with the most egregious human rights offenders. As such, the Conservatives receive a failing grade.

Sommaire exécutif

Jusqu'à cette année, le Canada était le seul pays de l'Organisation du traité de l'Atlantique nord (OTAN) qui n'avait pas encore signé le Traité international sur le commerce des armes (TCA). Le gouvernement Harper a refusé de signer le TCA lors de sa première entrée en vigueur en 2014. Les conservateurs d'Andrew Scheer ont maintenu cette même attitude isolationniste envers l'exportation des armes, et ont favorisé les bienfaits économiques de la vente d'armes aux questions de droits de la personne, même en ce qui concerne les plus grands auteurs de violation des droits de la

While the Liberals can be commended for finally signing onto the ATT, they left significant loopholes in Bill C-47 – the implementing legislation. Unfortunately, these loopholes will enable Canadian arms to continue to end up in the hands of abusive regimes.

The NDP scored well, given the party's longterm attempts to amend the Liberals' legislation and to raise the issue both online and in the House of Commons. The Bloc Québécois and the Greens, for their part, both called on the government to amend Bill C-47's loopholes, and thus received a favourable grade.

personne. C'est pour cela que les conservateurs ont reçu une note d'échec.

Bien que les libéraux puissent être félicités pour avoir enfin signé le TCA, ils ont laissé d'importantes échappatoires dans le projet de loi C-47 - la loi d'application du TCA. Malheureusement, ces échappatoires permettront aux armes canadiennes de continuer à tomber entre les mains de régimes abusifs.

Le NPD a eu un bon score, compte tenu des tentatives à long-terme du parti pour modifier la législation libérale et pour soulever la question à la fois en ligne et dans la Chambre des communes. Le Bloc québécois et les verts, pour leur part, ont tous les deux demandé au gouvernement de modifier les échappatoires du projet de loi C-47, et ont donc reçu une bonne note.

Background

The ATT is an international treaty which seeks to regulate the international arms trade in order to prevent human rights violations and armed conflict. In the words of the ATT itself, it seeks to “[e]stablish the highest possible common international standards for regulating or improving the regulation of the international trade in conventional arms [...]” for the purpose of “contributing to international and regional peace, security and stability [and] [r]educing human suffering.”²¹

In 2013, the ATT was passed by the UN General Assembly, with the international community ratifying the landmark treaty in 2014. The UN Conference on the ATT was hailed by many as the most important conventional weapons conference of this generation. Nevertheless, Canada was notably absent from the multilateral effort, as former Prime Minister Stephen Harper refused to sign and ratify the ATT.²² In December 2018, the Trudeau government passed Bill C-47 and initiated Canada's long-awaited accession to the ATT.²³ Canada deposited its instrument of accession to the ATT in June 2019, and will become an official State Party to the treaty in September 2019.²⁴

Nonetheless, the Trudeau government has faced significant criticism from human rights organizations, who consider Bill C-47 to be a flawed piece of legislation that violates the letter and spirit of the ATT.²⁵ Indeed, Bill C-47 has many loopholes that would allow for Canada to continue arms shipments to countries with poor human rights records. Canada currently maintains a \$15 billion-dollar arms agreement with Saudi Arabia, making it the 2nd biggest arms supplier to the Middle East – to one of the

world's worst human rights abusers. Stronger arms controls, which adhere to the spirit of the ATT, would prevent similarly unprincipled deals from being brokered in the future.

Liberal Position

In the lead-up to the 2015 federal election, Justin Trudeau promised to ratify the ATT, stating: "Canada needs to be once again a constructive actor on the world stage focusing on our national interests, which include security and stability in places like the Middle East."²⁶ A few years into their mandate, the Liberals introduced Bill C-47, but many Canadian human rights organizations argued that the bill failed to meet the standards set by the ATT. Among other things, Bill C-47 does not require that arms sales to the US be regulated or recorded. It also includes a provision that would allow Cabinet Ministers to override the ATT itself. MPs from opposing parties introduced amendments to Bill C-47 in committee, in an attempt to close these loopholes. However, the Liberals on the committee voted down each of these amendments. Therefore, despite being made aware of the bill's flaws, the Liberals refused to modify the legislation in any way that would further strengthen arms controls. Meanwhile, the Liberal government refuses to alter its \$15 billion contract for light armoured vehicles with Saudi Arabia. Meanwhile, the Liberals have failed to follow up seriously on allegations that Canadian-made weapons are being used against civilians in Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

Conservative Position

Under Stephen Harper's leadership, the Conservative government had no qualms about negotiating arms deals with human rights abusers. As a result, under the Harper government, there was an increased in arms exports to countries with poor human rights records.²⁷ Perhaps the most notorious of these deals is the still-active \$15 billion-dollar contract negotiated between the Harper government and Saudi Arabia. In keeping with his predecessor, Conservative leader Andrew Scheer has maintained his support for the arms deal with Saudi Arabia, despite the country's ongoing human rights abuses.²⁸

Like his predecessor, Andrew Scheer has been vocal about his opposition to the Arms Trade Treaty. In 2014, the Harper government isolated itself from Canadian allies at the UN when it refused to sign the Arms Trade Treaty. Many Canadian human rights organizations, including Project Ploughshares, criticized the government for allowing Canada to be the only NATO member not to have signed the ATT. At the time, a Conservative Foreign Affairs spokesperson justified Canada's opposition to the Treaty by claiming that it might infringe on the rights of Canadian firearms-owners – a claim that is misleading and false. Andrew Scheer has largely maintained this same rhetoric in opposition to the ATT. Conservative Members of Parliament also voted as a block against Bill C-47, which formalized Canadian accession to the ATT. Ahead of the vote, Conservative Foreign Affairs Critic Erin O'Toole once again echoed Harper-era rhetoric, claiming that Bill C-47 would force gun owners to submit to a federal registry.²⁹

NDP Position

Over the past several years, the NDP has campaigned vigorously for stronger arms controls and more rigorous reporting standards. While many NDP leaders and individual MPs have spoken out on this issue, the NDP's former Foreign Affairs Critic Hélène Laverdière was the most vocal on the issue. She has

published dozens of press releases and tweets, introduced numerous motions, and even written to Minister Freeland calling on the government to examine its arms exports regime.³⁰

During the 2015 federal election debate, then-NDP Leader Thomas Mulcair expressed his support for Canadian accession to the ATT, arguing that it would ensure Canadian-made weapons did not fall into the wrong hands.³¹ Since 2015, the NDP has prioritized the ATT file, consistently raising the issue in the House of Commons. The NDP has routinely echoed the concerns of many human rights organizations in arguing that Bill C-47 does not comply with the standards required by the Treaty. Indeed, Hélène Laverdière even went so far as to state that Bill C-47 “undermines” the Treaty itself.³² Expressing significant concern over the loopholes in the Liberal government’s Bill C-47, the NDP introduced an amendment to the bill that would have required Canada to “reassess existing arms export permits should new information about human rights abuses come to light”³³ – likely in reference to the Saudi arms deal. However, the Liberal majority in the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee rejected this amendment.

The NDP has also taken an uncompromising stand against arms sales to human rights abusers. Most notably, the party has been quite vocal in its opposition to the Saudi arms deal. Party MPs have repeatedly called on the Canadian government to cancel the deal, arguing that “continuing to send weapons to Saudi Arabia would be a complete abdication of our collective responsibility towards the lives of Saudi Arabians and Yemenis.”³⁴

Bloc Québécois Position

From the start, the Bloc Québécois expressed support for ratification of the ATT. During the debates on Bill C-47 in the House of Commons, Bloc MP Luc Thériault pointed out the shortcomings of the bill, asking: “What is the point of ratifying a treaty if a country [Canada] does not respect either the letter or spirit of that treaty?”³⁵ Raising the issue of the Saudi arms deal specifically, Thériault accused the government of turning a blind eye to human rights abuses, claiming that “the Liberals always put economic considerations ahead of human rights.” Indeed, Bloc MPs have, on numerous occasions, demanded that the Prime Minister cancel the \$15 billion-dollar arms deal with the Saudis. On the whole, arms control has not been a priority-issue for the Bloc Québécois. Nonetheless, the party has demonstrated principle in speaking out against arms exports to human rights abusers and demanding stricter regulations.

Green Position





As with the Bloc Québécois, arms control has not been a forefront issue for the Greens. Nonetheless, Green Party Leader Elizabeth May has maintained a principled position on the issue. Throughout the Bill C-47 debates, May called out her Conservative colleagues for their misleading comments comparing Bill C-47 to the long-gun registry. At the same time, May repeatedly called on the government to strengthen Bill C-47 and close the loophole on reporting arms exports to the US.³⁶ May has also criticized the government for its arms sales to Saudi Arabia, repeatedly reminding the Liberals that Canadian-made weapons are being used on civilians in Saudi Arabia and Yemen.³⁷ May has taken to Twitter on several occasions to vocalize her opposition to the Saudi arms deal. On the whole, the Green Party unequivocally opposes arms sales to countries with poor human rights records.



3 Aid to Palestinian Refugees / Soutien aux réfugiés palestiniens

SUPPORT FOR PALESTINIAN REFUGEES SOUTIEN AUX RÉFUGIÉS PALESTINIENS

Assessment / Évaluation

	Conservative Party of Canada / Parti conservateur du Canada	D
	New Democratic Party / Nouveau Parti démocratique	A-
	Liberal Party of Canada / Parti libéral du Canada	B+
	Bloc Québécois	n/a
	Green Party of Canada / Parti Vert du Canada	n/a

Executive Summary

Since the last Canadian federal election, the conditions faced by Palestinian refugees have rapidly deteriorated and worsened. This decline is mostly owed to the massive and sudden cuts brought by the Trump administration, such as its complete defunding of the UN aid agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) in August 2018.³⁸ Just three years prior, our own government, at the time headed by Stephen Harper, had also cancelled its funding to UNRWA.

Under the Trudeau government, however, this funding has been reinstated.³⁹ While the Liberals have so far maintained their funding commitments to UNRWA, they have done little to work toward a permanent solution for Palestinian

Sommaire

Depuis les dernières élections fédérales canadiennes, la situation des réfugiés palestiniens s'est rapidement détériorée. Ce déclin est principalement dû aux coupures massives et soudaines apportées par l'administration Trump, comme par exemple son retrait complet du financement de l'Office de secours des Nations unies pour les réfugiés palestiniens (UNRWA) en août 2018. Il y a seulement 3 ans, notre propre gouvernement, dirigé à l'époque par Stephen Harper, avait également retiré son financement à l'UNRWA.

Cependant, sous le gouvernement Trudeau, ce financement a été rétabli. Bien que les libéraux ont jusqu'à maintenant maintenu leurs

refugees. It is for this reason that the Liberals received a B+.

The New Democratic Party (NDP) received a slightly better score, given the fact that NDP MPs have been significantly more outspoken about the need to provide both financial and political support to Palestinian refugees. Nevertheless, Jagmeet Singh's continued silence on the issue is concerning.

The Conservatives, on the other hand, received a failing grade due to their continued attempts to smear and delegitimize UNRWA.

The Greens and the Bloc Québécois have remained silent on the UNRWA file, and thus were not given a grade.

engagements financiers envers l'UNRWA, ils n'ont pas fait grand-chose pour trouver une solution permanente pour les réfugiés palestiniens. C'est pour cette raison que les libéraux ont reçu un B+.

Le Nouveau parti démocratique (NPD) a reçu une note légèrement plus élevée, étant donné que les députés du NPD se sont exprimés beaucoup plus ouvertement sur la nécessité d'apporter un soutien financier et politique aux réfugiés palestiniens. Néanmoins, le silence persistant de Jagmeet Singh sur le sujet est préoccupant.

Les conservateurs, pour leur part, ont reçu une note d'échec étant donné leurs tentatives répétées pour dénigrer et délégitimer l'UNRWA.

Le Parti vert et le Bloc Québécois sont restés silencieux sur le dossier de l'UNRWA, et n'ont donc pas reçu de notes.

Background

The 1947-1949 war was the first in the longstanding Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This war culminated in the establishment of the State of Israel and the displacement of at least 700,000 Palestinian Arabs from their homes.⁴⁰ These Palestinians became refugees, displaced either within the Palestinian territories captured by Egypt or Jordan, or to surrounding Arab states. In 1949, UNRWA was established by United Nations General Assembly to implement direct relief and works programmes for these Palestinian refugees. In the absence of a permanent solution to the Palestine refugee problem, UNRWA's mandate has been continuously renewed since 1950 by the UN General Assembly.⁴¹ UNRWA defines a Palestinian refugee as anyone who was forcibly displaced from Palestine as a result of the 1948 conflict. The organization provides services to anyone who meets this definition, as well as their descendants. In all, UNRWA provides services to over 5 million Palestinian refugees.⁴² These Palestinian refugees remain stateless, as Israel refuses to accept them back, host countries refuse to naturalize them, and other countries refuse to accept them. UNRWA, therefore, works to supply critical services that are typically provided by the state, such as education, primary healthcare, and relief services.

UNRWA is funded almost entirely by voluntary contributions from UN Member States. It also receives some funding from the Regular Budget of the United Nations, although this portion is used mostly for staffing costs.⁴³ Given this dependency on donors for much of its funding, UNRWA is extremely vulnerable to domestic political changes and partisan considerations.

While providing financial support to UNRWA is an important step for securing the interim well-being of Palestinian refugees, it is not a sustainable and permanent solution to the ongoing refugee crisis.

Canada voted for the partition of historic Palestine in 1947, and has a responsibility to substantively to the effort to find a long-term solution for Palestinian refugees. As the gavel-holder for the Refugee Working Group, which was established out of the 1991 Middle East Peace Process, Canada is uniquely placed to raise the international profile of the Palestinian refugee issue.

Liberal Position

Liberal governments over the past few decades have consistently earmarked annual funds for UNRWA. Following years of outcry from human rights groups under Harper, the Trudeau government finally restored funding to UNRWA in 2016, announcing a \$25 million-dollar commitment to the organization. This funding commitment has thus far been annually renewed.⁴⁴ As mentioned above, the US government recently cut all funding to UNRWA. Given that the US was providing approximately one-third of UNRWA's annual budget, the agency was left scrambling for funds. Numerous countries pledged additional aid to the organization, but a massive funding gap remains. In October 2018, then-International Development Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau announced that Canada would provide \$50 million over two years to UNRWA.⁴⁵ However, it is not clear whether Bibeau is promising new funding, or simply providing an early announcement for the Liberal government's recent annual donations of \$25 million.

In July 2019, Al Jazeera published an internal report for UNRWA's ethics office, which detailed alleged abuses of authority amongst the agency's senior management team. The Liberal government released a statement expressing its concern over these allegations, but did not alter its funding obligations. This, despite intense criticism from the Conservative Party.⁴⁶

Since the election of the Trudeau government, the Liberals have restored traditional Canadian support for Palestinian refugees. However, the Liberal government has done little to advance any permanent solution for Palestinian refugees, while failing to condemn Israel's day-to-day abuses against Palestinians.

Conservative Position

The Conservative Party has long sought to politicize the struggle of Palestinian refugees and make support for Palestinian human rights a partisan issue. In 2009, the Harper government began slowly chipping away at Canadian funding commitments to UNRWA. By 2012, the Conservative government had cancelled all funding to UNRWA, arguing that the organization had links to Hamas.⁴⁷ In 2016, the Liberal government announced that it would restore funding to UNRWA. This decision was met with severe criticism by the Conservative Party. Then-Foreign Affairs Critic Peter Kent reacted with "horror," falsely claiming that there exists ample proof of UNRWA funding being redirected to Hamas.⁴⁸ Similar rhetoric has also been used by Conservative Party leader Andrew Scheer. In July 2019, Scheer said that a Conservative government would immediately withdraw Canadian funding from UNRWA.⁴⁹ Scheer elaborated on this point, repeating Harper-era accusations against UNRWA. He suggested that the organization had formal ties to Hamas, that it routinely used anti-Semitic rhetoric, and that it mismanaged funds. Scheer also pointed out that the Harper government was able to deliver some aid to Palestinians, while circumventing UNRWA.⁵⁰

Under a Scheer government, it is evident that Canada would cease to be a donor to UNRWA under a Conservative government. That being said, Scheer's statements do not completely rule out economic support for Palestinian refugee programmes. In theory, the Conservatives support some assistance to Palestinian refugees—as long as this funding is not going to UNRWA. However, given the fact that UNRWA runs the largest and most established assistance programme for Palestinian refugees, the Conservatives' plan to defund UNRWA would directly impact large numbers of Palestinian refugees.

NDP Position

The NDP, under both Thomas Mulcair and Jagmeet Singh, has remained firm in its commitment to ensure the Canadian government provides critical financial assistance to Palestinian refugees. Shortly after the Harper government's cancellation of funds to UNRWA, NDP MPs began calling for this funding to be reinstated. Following Trudeau's election in 2015, the NDP turned its attention to the Liberals, and issued several statements urging them to restore aid to Palestinian refugees. When the Conservatives criticized the Liberal government's renewal of funding to UNRWA, the NDP denounced their claims that UNRWA was propagating terror. NDP Foreign Affairs Critic Hélène Laverdière even issued a statement arguing that support for schools would keep young Palestinians off the streets and reduce the likelihood of their recruitment by militant groups.⁵¹ When President Trump announced that the US would no longer provide funding to UNRWA, Hélène Laverdière once again spoke out, calling on the Liberals to increase their assistance to UNRWA.⁵²

As proactive as Laverdière has been, NDP leader Jagmeet Singh has remained completely silent on the UNRWA file.

In addition to the NDP's continued support for aid to Palestinian refugees, the NDP has also been quite vocal in its condemnation of Israel's human rights abuses. This demonstrates that they understand the need for financial support of refugees to be coupled with political support for Palestinian rights.

Bloc Québécois Position

CJPME was unable to find any statement pertaining to UNRWA or Palestinian refugees.






Green Position

CJPME was unable to find any statement pertaining to UNRWA or Palestinian refugees.

4 Israel's Illegal Settlements / Les colonies illégales d'Israël

ISRAEL'S ILLEGAL 'SETTLEMENTS' LES COLONIES ILLÉGALES D'ISRAËL

Assessment / Évaluation

 Conservative Party of Canada / Parti conservateur du Canada	F
 New Democratic Party / Nouveau Parti démocratique	B+
 Liberal Party of Canada / Parti libéral du Canada	C-
 Bloc Québécois	B
 Green Party of Canada / Parti Vert du Canada	B+

Executive Summary

Like so many Israel-Palestine related issues, the Liberals under Trudeau have repeatedly failed to condemn Israel's clear violations of international law on the issue of "settlements." The Trudeau government's policy since the last election has been scarcely different than that of the previous Harper government.

Similarly, the Conservative Party has failed to condemn the illegal "settlements," instead maintaining a longstanding pattern of unequivocal support for Israel and its policies in the OPT.

The NDP, on the other hand, has consistently pointed out the grave problem that Israeli "settlements" pose to a resolution of the conflict.

Sommaire

Comme sur bien d'autres questions relatives à Israël et à la Palestine, les libéraux ont échoué à plusieurs reprises à condamner les violations claires d'Israël du droit international sur la question des « implantations ». La politique du gouvernement Trudeau depuis la dernière élection ne présente que peu de différences avec celle du gouvernement Harper.

De même, le Parti conservateur n'a pas condamné les colonies illégales, mais a plutôt maintenu sa tendance de longue date à soutenir sans réserve Israël et ses politiques dans les Territoires palestiniens occupés.

Le NPD, pour sa part, n'a cessé de souligner le grave problème que les « implantations »

Indeed, since the last election, the NDP has made a larger effort to raise the issue more forcefully.

In a similar way, the Greens have a solid party platform on the question of “settlements,” and have been vocal in their opposition to Israel’s “settlement” expansion in the West Bank.

The Bloc Québécois, meanwhile, has mostly addressed the issue indirectly, but properly defers to international law on this and related issues.

israéliennes posent à la paix et à la stabilité dans la région. En effet, depuis les dernières élections, le NPD a fait un effort important pour soulever la question plus énergiquement.

De la même façon, le Parti vert a un programme solide sur la question des « implantations », et s’est opposé avec force à l’expansion des « colonies » israéliennes en Cisjordanie.

Le Bloc québécois, quant à lui, s’est surtout penché sur la question de façon indirecte, mais il s’en remet à juste titre au droit international sur cette question et les questions connexes.

Background

Background

There are currently over 130 Israeli colonies,⁵³ often referred to as “settlements,” over 110 Israeli “outposts”⁵⁴ and other Jewish-only enclaves on occupied Palestinian territory (OPT).⁵⁵ Altogether, these “settlements” house well over 620,000 colonists.⁵⁶ They are located on land militarily occupied by Israel since 1967, including the West Bank (which includes East Jerusalem) and the Golan Heights. Although the colonies themselves cover under 2 percent of the OPT, Israel has established a web of Israeli-only roads, military bases, buffer zones and reserved areas around these colonies and its illegal border wall. Palestinians are barred from all of these areas, which, together with the colonies themselves, cover at least 40 percent of the West Bank.

Jewish-only Israeli colonies in the OPT have long been one of the major obstacles to peace between Israel and the Palestinians. The building of Israeli colonies on Palestinian makes the implementation of a two-state solution more logistically and politically complicated. A series of Jewish-only roads connecting the colonies to one another and to Israel proper slice the OPT into 43 non-contiguous and isolated communities,⁵⁷ making the creation of a Palestinian state virtually impossible.⁵⁸

The expansion of colonies is the result of a concerted effort by the Israeli government to settle its own civilian population on Palestinian land in order to consolidate control over the OPT.⁵⁹ Since 1967, every Israeli government—regardless of its political inclination—has permitted the expansion of these Israeli colonies.⁶⁰

Given that all Canadian political parties officially support a two-state solution between Israel and the Palestinians, one would think that they would all vocally criticize Israel’s “settlements.” This, however, is not the case.

Liberal Position

Since the Trudeau government came to power, it has been consistently reluctant to criticize Israel's expansion of illegal colonies in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. On foreign affairs, the Liberal Party's 2019 platform has not yet been updated from their 2015 platform, which only mentioned Canada's relationships with the United States.⁶¹ This demonstrates the Liberal party's reticence to outline any foreign policy positions over the past two election cycles. The Liberal party is largely silent on the issue of illegal "settlements." When Trudeau mentions Israel, he always emphasizes Israeli security concerns, without mention of its illegal colonies or international law.⁶² Global Affairs Canada currently recognizes the illegality of Israeli "settlements," just as it did under the Harper government, but the Prime Minister himself has been silent on the issue of colonies.⁶³

Former Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion condemned Israeli "settlements" on numerous occasions during his term. However, his position was much weaker than US Secretary of State John Kerry's criticism of "settlements." The Liberal Party's condemnation of these illegal colonies became increasingly faint after Stéphane Dion's tenure as Foreign Minister ended. Successor Chrystia Freeland's strongest critique of Israeli colonization came after Israel retroactively legalized "settlements" built on privately owned Palestinian land. She said: "Canada is very concerned ... and we want to underline that this expansion of "settlements" is illegal under international law", later adding that Canada was "calling on all parties not to make unilateral moves which could have a negative effect."⁶⁴

When Israel approved applications for a spate of illegal "settlements" in 2017, even the Trump administration condemned the project.⁶⁵ The Trudeau government, however, remained silent.

The situation has been scarcely better in Parliament. Most Liberal MPs have not taken a principled stand in the debates surrounding the Canada Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA), generally choosing to emphasize the benefits of free trade instead of calling attention to the human rights abuses associated with Israel's illegal "settlements"⁶⁶ Bottom line, the Trudeau government claims to support international law, yet rarely condemns Israel's "settlement" enterprise, which is in clear violation of international law.

Conservative Position

Under the Harper government, settlements were recognized by the Canadian government as illegal under international law; however, government representatives rarely spoke out against them. Currently, the Conservative Party platform contains no mention of Israel's colonies, and Andrew Scheer has made no comments on them.⁶⁷ Since the last election, then-Foreign Affairs Critic John Baird criticized a statement made by former Foreign Affairs minister Stéphane Dion that condemned Israeli settlements and Palestinian bids for recognition, saying that it was not pro-Israel enough. When the House debated legislation to revamp the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA) in 2018, Conservative MPs completely ignored the issue of the OPT being designated in the bill as a part of Israel. Instead, most members heralded the economic benefits of including the OPT in the trade agreement and commended Israel for its economic output.⁶⁸

In April 2018, the Canada-Palestine Parliamentary Friendship Group visited the West Bank. Of the 18 MPs making up the delegation, only one—Garnett Genuis—was from the Conservative Party. Genuis wrote an op-ed in which he recounts meeting Palestinian schoolgirls in the West Bank who did not want

to interact with Jewish children from a nearby settlement. Genuis concluded that this anecdote was emblematic of Palestinian isolationism, and that this behavior presented a key obstacle to peace.⁶⁹ His op-ed failed to recognize that these Palestinian children live under military occupation, and cannot be expected to befriend their colonizing neighbours. This rhetoric, which fails to recognize the complex and dangerous impact of these illegal “settlements” is common amongst Conservative MPs.

In all, despite universal international condemnation of Israel’s illegal “settlements”, the Conservative Party has, on every occasion, failed to denounce Israel’s colonies.

NDP Position

Historically, the NDP has largely opposed Israeli colonies in the Palestinian territories, and has included statements to this effect in its party platforms. In recent years, the NDP party platforms have become more ambiguous on the issue, although individual NDP MPs will assert that this is still the position of the party.

NDP leader Jagmeet Singh has stated his opposition to Israel’s illegal colonies, having tweeted: “In 2016 I traveled to the Middle East. I witnessed the technology & development in Israel. I was shocked by the contrast I saw in Palestine. I witnessed the presence of Israeli military occupation in Hebron & the frustrating conditions created by settlements deep in the West Bank. I stand with concerned Canadians & the UN in calling for an end to the illegal settlements, as they are a deterrent to peace for all.”⁷⁰

Jagmeet Singh also responded to CJPME’s candidate Questionnaire regarding this issue during the NDP leadership race, and voiced support for labelling products from the OPT, including those covered under CIFTA, and would consider a ban on colony products.⁷¹

Meanwhile, rank and file NDP MPs repeatedly brought up the issue of “settlements” during the Parliamentary debate on CIFTA, reaffirming that the NDP does not support the inclusion of these illegal “settlements” in the free trade agreement. This push to have CIFTA distinguish between the State of Israel and the occupied territories demonstrates the NDP’s respect for international law on this issue.

Bloc Québécois Position

While the Bloc’s (BQ) foreign policy platform is threadbare, Israel-Palestine is one of the few specific issues it mentions. However, besides a vague assertion that Canadian policy on the issue is unbalanced, the platform contains little of substance. Still, the party’s leadership and individual members have spoken out against Israeli colonies. When CIFTA came up for a vote, Bloc MP Gabriel Ste-Marie spoke out against the inclusion of the occupied territories in CIFTA’s definition of Israel and reasserted Bloc Québécois support for international law on the issue.⁷² There have been no statements specifically on the issue of “settlements” since. The BQ’s position on this matter reflects the primacy of international law in their platform; however, this issue is not a priority for them, as the party uses its limited influence to pursue other causes.






Green Position

In contrast with the other parties, the Green Party actually dedicates a subsection of their “Vision Green”⁷³ ²¹ to the Israel – Palestine conflict. The stated goal of Green Party MPs regarding “settlements” is to “call on Israel to stop expansion and the building of illegal settlements beyond the 1967 borders.”⁷⁴ ²² Furthermore, leader Elizabeth May has stated several times that she does not support the expansion of Israeli “settlements,” prefers not to buy products that come from “illegal Israel”, and agrees with former IDF generals that “settlements” outside the 1967 borders make “legal Israel” less secure. However, these statements were also made against the backdrop of May’s vocal opposition to a BDS resolution passed by the party.⁷⁵ ²³ The Green Party’s platform officially proposes policy to denounce illegal Israeli colonies but tends to waver when forced to discuss the issue of “settlements” as a party.

5 Israel's Killing of Protesters in Gaza / L'exécution par Israël de civils palestiniens à Gaza

ISRAEL'S KILLING OF PROTESTORS IN GAZA L'EXÉCUTION PAR ISRAËL DE CIVILS PALESTINIENS

Assessment / Évaluation

 Conservative Party of Canada / Parti conservateur du Canada	D
 New Democratic Party / Nouveau Parti démocratique	B+
 Liberal Party of Canada / Parti libéral du Canada	C+
 Bloc Québécois	n/a
 Green Party of Canada / Parti Vert du Canada	A

Executive Summary

The NDP and Greens both received relatively high marks, given their consistent vocal opposition to Israel's killing of Palestinian civilians. The Greens scored slightly better given Green Party Leader Elizabeth May's call for a Canadian arms embargo against Israel – a specific pressure tactic which would have likely had a tangible impact on Israel's actions in Gaza.

While the Liberal position on this issue was not stellar, it was certainly more balanced than its positions on other Israel-Palestine issues. The Prime Minister's statement condemning Israel's indiscriminate killing of Palestinian protestors as "inexcusable" was good. However, the Liberals received a lower grade than the NDP and the

Sommaire

Le NPD et les verts ont tous deux reçus des notes relativement élevées, étant donné leur opposition catégorique et constante à l'exécution par Israël de civils palestiniens. Les verts ont eu une meilleure note étant donné que la chef du Parti vert, Elizabeth May, a exigé un embargo canadien sur les armes contre Israël – un moyen de pression spécifique qui aurait probablement eu un impact tangible sur les actions d'Israël à Gaza.

Même si la position des libéraux sur cette question n'était pas remarquable, elle était certainement plus équilibrée que leurs positions sur d'autres questions relatives au conflit israélo-palestinien. La déclaration du Premier ministre

Greens given their unwillingness to follow through on their call for an independent investigation into the killings in Gaza. Moreover, multiple Liberal MPs broke away from the party line, adopting positions more forgiving of Israel instead.

The Conservatives received a low grade as they 1) sought to rationalize Israel's killings of Palestinian civilians; 2) tarred all Palestinian protestors as terrorists; and 3) opposed an independent investigation into the violence in Gaza.

condamnant le massacre aveugle de manifestants palestiniens par Israël comme étant « inexcusable » est une bonne chose. Néanmoins, les libéraux ont reçu une note moins élevée que le NPD et le Parti vert étant donné leur réticence à donner suite à leur requête au sujet d'une enquête indépendante sur les meurtres commis à Gaza. De plus, plusieurs députés libéraux se sont éloignés de la ligne du parti et ont adopté des positions plus indulgentes à l'égard d'Israël.

Les conservateurs ont reçu une note assez faible puisqu'ils 1) ont cherché à rationaliser les meurtres israéliens de civils palestiniens; 2) ont qualifié tous les manifestants palestiniens de terroristes; et 3) se sont opposés à une enquête indépendante sur la violence à Gaza.

Background

Since the 2015 Canadian elections, there have been intermittent flare-ups of violence between Israel and Hamas, as well as significant Israeli violence levelled against Palestinian protestors. Since March 2018, thousands of Palestinians have participated in the "Great March of Return" protests at Gaza's border with Israeli, peacefully asserting their right to return to their homeland, as stipulated by UN Resolution 194. Israeli security forces responded violently, injuring nearly 30,000 Palestinians and killing over 200 civilians, including children, members of the media and medics.⁷⁶ Israel's excessive use of violence against Palestinian civilians has led many to label their actions as not only criminal, but a large-scale massacre.⁷⁷

UN investigators have expressed significant concern with Israel's excessive use of violence against Palestinians civilians, claiming "these serious human rights and humanitarian law violations may constitute war crimes or crimes against humanity."⁷⁸ While the Israeli government and some Western media have tried to portray Israel's actions as acts of self-defence against Palestinian "terror activities," the UN has made clear that Palestinian actions have not amounted to combat or military campaigns, as "the demonstrations were civilian in nature, with clearly stated political aims."⁷⁹

The "Great March of Return" demonstrations take place in the context of Israel's 12-year blockade of the Gaza Strip. Israel's blockade has caused a humanitarian crisis in Gaza, negatively affecting the livelihoods and access to essential service of Gaza's nearly 2 million residents, the majority of whom are Palestinian refugees. Conditions in Gaza are so bad that in 2015, the UN warned that Gaza could be "uninhabitable" by 2020 if Israel's military operations and blockade continue.⁸⁰

As the occupying force, Israel has a responsibility under international law to ensure the well-being of Palestinians in Gaza – a responsibility it has ignored for years. It is therefore highly disingenuous when

an outside party – e.g. a Canadian political party – tries to sum up Israel’s violence as self-defence, especially in the context of violence against civilians, a grave violation of international law.

Liberal Position

While the Liberal government has demonstrated principle in condemning Israel’s violence against Palestinians in Gaza, the Party has been highly inconsistent in its various declarations. Throughout Trudeau’s mandate, the Liberal government has failed to criticize Israel’s human rights abuses against Palestinians, with one exception. The Liberal government broke its silence when Israel began killing Palestinian civilians in Gaza for protesting in March 2018. By May 2019, the Prime Minister himself issued a statement condemning Israel’s use of live ammunition and excessive force as “inexcusable.”⁸¹ He furthermore stated that he was “appalled” by the violence against unarmed people and called for an independent investigation to establish the facts on the ground. It is worthwhile to note, however, that while the violence began in March 2018, the Prime Minister’s criticism of Israel’s actions came only two months later – in May 2018 – after Canadian doctor Tarek Loubani was shot in the legs by the Israeli military.

Despite Trudeau’s initial call for an independent investigation, the Liberals failed to follow through on this call. Worse, the Liberal government abstained on a UN emergency session vote in June, 2018 which called for a ceasefire and an independent investigation into the violence.⁸²

Despite the official position of the Liberal government, several individual Liberal MPs rejected the party line on Israel’s killings of Palestinians in Gaza. For example, Liberal MPs Michael Levitt, Marco Mendicino, and Anthony Housefather all defended Israel, suggesting a correlation between Palestinian civilian protestors and Hamas and/or the Iranian regime.⁸³ Despite the UN’s statement to the contrary, one Liberal MP even stated in the House of Commons that Hamas bears “moral responsibility and culpability for the unfortunate loss of [Palestinian] life.”⁸⁴

Conservative Position

Under the Harper government, each time there was a violent flare-up or war in Gaza, the Conservatives took a very simplistic position *a priori* that Israel was simply defending itself against an irrational and violent Hamas. With no interest in the broader context, and without human rights law as a sounding board, the Conservative Party became a type of cheerleader for Israel, right or wrong.

While the Conservative Party under Andrew Scheer’s leadership has not taken an explicit position on the Great March of Return protests, it continues to tar all Palestinian civilians as violent extremists and mindless Hamas supporters. A close look at statements from MPs and the Conservative Party’s silence on Israel’s killings of Palestinian civilians suggests that the Party has continued the Harper government’s tradition of unconditional support for Israel.

While other Canadian political parties criticized Israel’s killings of Palestinian protestors in the Great March of Return, the Conservative Party Foreign Affairs Critic Erin O’Toole issued a tepid tweet calling for “dialogue” and expressing concern with the “violence in Gaza.”⁸⁵ At the same time, he stated in the House of Commons that he did not believe the international community should launch an inquiry into

the violence in Gaza. Even after Canadian doctor Tarek Loubani was shot by Israeli snipers, O'Toole reaffirmed his opposition to an inquiry, stating, "certainly [Loubani] knows that in some of the things he's engaged with... there are certain risks."⁸⁶

Like O'Toole, CPC MP Garnett Genuis has made several statements on the March of Return in the House of Commons, each time blaming Palestinians for their own deaths. While the Palestinian right of return is protected under international law, Genuis criticized the protestors for asserting this right and accused them of seeking to "violently" cross the border.⁸⁷ Such a statement decontextualizes the situation by failing to recognize that Palestinians in Gaza are living under a blockade and thus do not even have the right to *peacefully* cross the border. Genuis and other CPC MPs also perpetuate the pro-Israel lobby's aspersions against Palestinians by suggesting that the protests are Hamas-organized with Iranian backing.⁸⁸

NDP Position

From the start of the Great March of Return protests in March 2018, the NDP has persistently condemned Israel's attacks on Palestinian protestors. The NDP has also consistently challenged the Canadian government to hold Israel to account for its human rights violations.

After Israel began its killing of Palestinian civilians in March 2018, then-NDP Foreign Affairs Critic Hélène Laverdière took to Twitter to express her dismay, calling on Israel to stop the killing and "abide by its responsibilities under international law & respect human rights."⁸⁹ Since then, the NDP has made several statements and posed questions to the government in the House of Commons on this matter. On May 14th, 2018, after 55 Palestinians were killed by the Israeli military, NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh issued a strong statement calling Israel's actions a "clear" violation of international law, while urging the Canadian government to condemn the violence and support an independent investigation into the killings.⁹⁰ At the same time, individual MPs in the House of Commons challenged inconsistencies in the Liberal governments' reaction to the Israeli massacre of Palestinians.⁹¹

Following Trudeau's call for an independent investigation into Israel's killing of Palestinian civilians in Gaza, the NDP urged Trudeau to keep his word and push for the investigation.

Bloc Québécois Position

There is no record of the Bloc Québécois' position on this issue.

Green Position



Last year, when Israel began violently attacking Palestinian protestors, GPC Leader Elizabeth May issued several statements vocally condemning Israel's actions. Moreover, she refuted Conservative and Liberal claims that Israel's military actions were justified as self-defence, echoing the UN in stating that Gaza's civilians were not a threat to Israel.⁹² May also joined the Trudeau government and the international community in demanding an independent investigation into the killings of Palestinians in Gaza.⁹³

In addition to her principled statements, May was the only Canadian political leader to call on the government to put economic pressure on Israel to respect international law. May demanded that Canada “suspend all military trade with Israel” and replace the United States as a truly honest broker in the conflict.⁹⁴

6 Response to Saudi human rights abuses / Réponse aux abus saoudiens

RESPONSE TO SAUDI HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES RÉPONSE AUX ABUS SAUDIENS

Assessment / Évaluation

	Conservative Party of Canada / Parti conservateur du Canada	F
	New Democratic Party / Nouveau Parti démocratique	A
	Liberal Party of Canada / Parti libéral du Canada	D
	Bloc Québécois	n/a
	Green Party of Canada / Parti Vert du Canada	A-

Executive Summary

Since 2015, the Liberal government has condemned Saudi Arabia's human rights abuses on numerous occasions. However, the government has failed to make any concrete changes in its policy toward the Saudis. Talk with no action earns the Liberals a barely passing grade.

The Conservative response, meanwhile, is even more disappointing as the party has actually criticized Canadian-led human rights interventions. The Conservatives have also repeatedly reiterated the need for Canada to maintain strong commercial and political ties

Sommaire exécutif

Depuis 2015, le gouvernement libéral a condamné à maintes reprises les violations des droits de la personne en Arabie saoudite. Néanmoins, le gouvernement a échoué à mettre en œuvre des changements concrets dans ses politiques envers les Saoudiens. Beaucoup de discours sans action ont valu aux libéraux une note de passage juste.

La réponse des conservateurs, quant à elle, est d'autant plus décevante étant donné que le parti a critiqué les interventions canadiennes en matière de droits de la personne. Les conservateurs ont également

with Saudi Arabia, despite its abuses. For this, the Conservatives earn a failing grade.

Contrary to the Conservatives, the Bloc Québécois (BQ) have been quick to condemn Saudi human rights abuses. The Greens have also consistently condemned Saudi abuses, while calling for a complete arms embargo on Saudi Arabia.

The NDP has been the most vocal in criticizing Saudi Arabia's abuses and has continued to hold the government accountable for its arms sales to the Saudis. As such three parties received strong grades.

réitéré à de nombreuses reprises la nécessité pour le Canada de maintenir des liens commerciaux et politiques solides avec l'Arabie saoudite, malgré ses abus. Pour cette raison, les conservateurs ont obtenu une note d'échec.

Contrairement aux conservateurs, le Bloc québécois (BQ) s'est empressé de condamner les violations des droits de la personne en Arabie saoudite. Les verts ont également systématiquement condamné les abus saoudiens, tout en appelant à un embargo complet sur les armes à destination de l'Arabie saoudite.

Le NPD a été le plus loquace dans sa critique des abus de l'Arabie saoudite et a continué de tenir le gouvernement responsable pour sa vente d'armes aux saoudiens. Ainsi, les trois partis ont reçu de bonnes notes.

Background

As a major oil exporter and regional power, Saudi Arabia remains key to Canadian foreign policy in the Middle East. The Kingdom has always been conservative, and maintaining diplomatic relationships with Saudi Arabia while enforcing uniform standards for human rights worldwide has been a challenge. With Mohammed bin Salman (MbS) as the de facto leader of Saudi Arabia, incoming government will have to navigate Saudi Arabia's domestic civil rights abuses, especially:

Domestic Human Rights Violations: Under Saudi law, the rights of women and minorities continue to be restricted. Some limited reforms have been enacted; for example, the Saudi government announced in August 2019 that it would be eliminating part of its male guardianship system, finally granting women the right to obtain passports.⁹⁵ Nonetheless, key aspects of the male guardianship system remain in place. Women still need permission of a male guardian to marry or divorce, and still require a male guardian to receive elective medical care. This is merely one example of the innumerable laws that make up Saudi Arabia's prejudiced system. In addition to this gender-based repression, Saudi Arabia's puritanical government also brutally persecutes religious minorities.⁹⁶ Meanwhile, activists, religious leaders and intellectuals who express opinions contrary to those of the monarchy are routinely jailed for indefinite periods. Punishments for all crimes tend to be draconian, with high rates of execution by beheading or stoning for non-violent crimes.⁹⁷

Safety of Saudi Critics Abroad: In addition to continuing human rights abuses domestically, MbS has also targeted his critics internationally. Jamal Khashoggi, a Saudi journalist who was critical of MbS, was

murdered and dismembered on direct orders from MbS in Saudi Arabia's Istanbul consulate last year.⁹⁸ Though MbS has refused to take responsibility for Khashoggi's murder, the ordeal sends a clear message to critics: the Saudi monarchy will not tolerate dissidence. Indeed, even residents of Canada have been targeted by Saudi surveillance, and it is not unfathomable that this overreach could escalate.⁹⁹

Liberal Position

In 2018, Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland tweeted her "alarm" at Saudi Arabia's imprisonment of numerous feminist activists.¹⁰⁰ Her willingness to shed light on these human rights abuses is laudable, although this condemnation was followed by little concrete action. The Liberal Party has often boasted about its "feminist" foreign policy, which aims to support women's rights around the world. Saudi Arabia would seem to be an ideal target for this "feminist" foreign policy, as Saudi Arabia remains one of the world's most repressive societies for women. However, despite the government's "feminist" foreign policy objectives, Canada has taken no bold diplomatic steps to improve the lot of Saudi women.

Following Khashoggi's murder, Trudeau publicly stated that he would examine the possibility of cancelling arms exports to Saudi Arabia.¹⁰¹ In retrospect, the Liberals' promise to review the arms deal seems to have been a way bury the issue in the wake of Khashoggi's murder.

The Trudeau government has largely voiced its frustration with Saudi human rights abuses through tweets. Despite its willingness to condemn abuses, however, the government has maintained strong economic ties with the Kingdom. The Liberals fail to admit that these arms exports merely embolden and strengthen the Saudi regime.

Conservative Position

Whereas the Harper government did occasionally condemn Saudi abuses or agitate for the release of activists, the Conservatives under Scheer have been largely silent on the issue of Saudi abuses. Under the Harper government, former Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird called for clemency for Raif Badawi, a jailed Saudi blogger whose wife and children are Canadian citizens. The Harper government also pushed privately for the activist's release.¹⁰² Despite these agitations, the Conservatives did not hesitate to negotiate a \$15 billion-dollar arms deal with the Saudis.

After the gruesome details of the Khashoggi murder emerged in October 2018, Conservative leader Andrew Scheer opposed ending the Saudi arms deal. Instead, he proposed sanctioning Saudi Arabia by ceasing to import their oil. Such contradictory stances cast the authenticity of Scheer's concern for Khashoggi in doubt.

In August 2019, the party's Foreign Affairs Critic Erin O'Toole announced that if elected, the Conservatives would prioritize the restoration of ties with Saudi Arabia.¹⁰³ O'Toole has thus far promised to increase aid packages and commercial ties with the Saudi monarchy – despite its grave human rights abuses.

NDP Position

The NDP has been consistent in its support for international law and has repeatedly called for sanctions against Saudi human rights abuses. NDP leader Jagmeet Singh said that he would tear up the arms deal with Saudi Arabia if he were Prime Minister, and pointed out that there was enough justification to do so even before the the Khashoggi murder.¹⁰⁴ For years, MP Hélène Laverdière campaigned against the Saudi arms deal, raising the issue in the House of Commons and in op-eds at least 28 times in 2018 alone. On the whole, the party has been consistent in its condemnation of the arms deal, and has repeatedly called for its cancellation.¹⁰⁵¹⁰⁶

The NDP has also been consistent in its support for Saudi dissidents and activists. In January 2016, then-Foreign Affairs critic Hélène Laverdière released a statement condemning the arrest and detention of Saudi activist Samar Badawi.¹⁰⁷

Bloc Québécois Position

While the Bloc spoke out about Saudi human rights abuses several times prior to 2015, CJPME was unable to find many statements by the party or its leaders over the past four years.






Green Position

Elizabeth May and the Greens have been clear from the outset that they oppose the sale of Canadian-made weapons to Saudi Arabia. The party has long called for an arms embargo on Saudi Arabia, far before the Khashoggi murder.¹⁰⁸ May also tweeted her support for Chrystia Freeland’s condemnation of Saudi human rights abuses in 2018, saying “We should have done more and cancelled tank sale long ago.”¹⁰⁹ The Greens have a long history of condemning Saudi abuses and have opposed the arms deal from the start.

7 Incarceration of Palestinian Children / L'incarcération des enfants palestiniens par Israël

ISRAEL'S INCARCERATION OF PALESTINIAN CHILDREN L'INCARCÉRATION DES ENFANTS PALESTINIENS

Assessment / Évaluation

	Conservative Party of Canada / Parti conservateur du Canada	F
	New Democratic Party / Nouveau Parti démocratique	A-
	Liberal Party of Canada / Parti libéral du Canada	C-
	Bloc Québécois	B
	Green Party of Canada / Parti Vert du Canada	B+

Executive Summary

Over the past couple years, Israel's systemic incarceration of Palestinian children has gained considerable international attention. Two parties, the NDP and the Greens, have sought to elevate this issue in Canadian politics, taking several steps to urge the Trudeau government to put pressure on Israel to end its practice of detaining Palestinian minors. While not as vocal as the NDP and the Greens, the BQ has demonstrated principle on this issue, and has stood in solidarity with NDP and Green MPs at press conferences that address Israel's mistreatment of Palestinian children.

Sommaire

Ces dernières années, l'incarcération systémique des enfants palestiniens par Israël a gagné une attention internationale considérable. Deux partis, le NPD et le Parti vert, ont tenté d'aborder ce problème dans la politique canadienne, en prenant plusieurs mesures pour exhorter le gouvernement Trudeau à faire pression sur Israël pour qu'elle mette fin à sa pratique consistant à détenir des mineurs palestiniens. Bien qu'il ne se soit pas autant exprimé sur le sujet que le NPD et le Parti vert, le BQ a fait preuve de principes sur cette question et a été solidaire avec les députés du NPD et du Parti vert lors de conférences de presse sur les mauvais traitements infligés par Israël aux enfants Palestiniens.

Standing in stark contrast with these parties is the Liberal government. Despite being questioned on numerous occasions about Israel's systemic incarcerations of Palestinian children, the Liberal government has refused to condemn Israel's actions. While individual Liberal MPs put their names to a report decrying Israel's incarceration of Palestinian children, the report was a bi-partisan effort following a parliamentary trip to the Palestinian territories.

The Conservatives scored the lowest in this evaluation given their unwillingness address this issue in any way.

En contradiction totale avec ces partis se place le gouvernement libéral. Bien qu'il ait été interrogé à de nombreuses reprises sur les incarcérations systématiques d'enfants palestiniens par Israël, le gouvernement libéral a refusé de condamner les actions d'Israël. Alors que des députés libéraux ont ajouté leur nom à un rapport dénonçant l'incarcération d'enfants palestiniens par Israël, ce rapport était le fruit d'un effort bipartisan à la suite d'un voyage parlementaire dans les Territoires palestiniens.

Les conservateurs ont eu la note la plus basse dans cette évaluation étant donné leur réticence à aborder le sujet de quelque façon.

Background

Israel is the only country that "automatically and systematically prosecutes children in military courts that lack fundamental fair trial rights and protections."¹¹⁰ Each year, Israel arrests, detains, and prosecutes 500 to 700 Palestinian children in the military court system.¹¹¹ Israel is also one of only 10 countries to allow children to be held under administrative detention, "an alternative to charging them with a criminal offence, where there are concerns that there is insufficient evidence to prosecute a child".^{112,113} Since in most cases administrative detainees are not informed of the charges that are held against them, Palestinian minors are unable to mount a defence. This clearly violates the Fourth Geneva Convention (Art. 70 and 71) which "requires that a fair trial be established and the accused clearly informed of their indictments".¹¹⁴ Under Israeli military law, the Israeli army is allowed to administratively detain Palestinian children as young as 12 years old, and Palestinians over the age of 16 are considered and sentenced as adults.¹¹⁵ In contrast, all Western countries consider 18 the age of majority.

When incarcerated by Israel, Palestinian children are exposed to prison overcrowding, poor quality and inadequate amounts of food, and harsh treatment by prison officials.¹¹⁶ Reports by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and Defense for Children International (DCI) Palestine also shed light on cases of torture and mistreatment of Palestinian child prisoners; there are reports that children had their heads covered,¹¹⁷ were subjected to beatings and were suspended by their arms and legs.¹¹⁸ This, despite Israel ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991, which states that "children must not be unlawfully or arbitrarily detained, and must not be subjected to torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."¹¹⁹

As a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Fourth Convention of Geneva, and the UN Convention against Torture, the Canadian government has the obligation to demand Israel to respect its commitments under international law.

In 2013, DCI-Palestine and the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) launched the “No Way To Treat A Child” (NWTTAC) campaign in the United States, which aimed to put an end to the systematic ill-treatment of Palestinian children in Israeli military detention. The NWTTAC campaign eventually reached Canada and gathered dozens of prominent national, regional and local partners in Canada, including CJPME, Amnesty International Canada, and the United Church of Canada.

In late 2017, following the arrest of blonde-haired and blue-eyed Palestinian teen activist Ahed Tamimi, Israel’s detention of Palestinian minors began to receive more international attention. The internationally community was outraged after Tamimi was arrested by Israeli soldiers in December 2017 for slapping a soldier. Tamimi was arrested after the release of a video in which she was slapping and kicking two Israeli soldiers who were breaking into her family’s home. Although Tamimi is not the first Palestinian child to be arrested by Israeli forces, she has received unprecedented international attention and quickly became a symbol of Palestinian resistance.¹²⁰ Canadian UN Special Rapporteur on Israel-Palestine, Michael Lynk, argued for the release of Tamimi, stating that “none of the facts of this case would appear to justify her ongoing detention.”¹²¹

Liberal Party

Throughout its 4-year tenure, the Trudeau government remained silent on the subject of imprisoned Palestinian children and their conditions in Israeli jails. Since his time in office, PM Trudeau has never once condemned Israel’s violations of international law regarding children and prisoners’ rights.

Despite being questioned about her case in the House of Commons, the Trudeau government failed to condemn the arrest of Ahed Tamimi.

In 2018, the Canada-Palestine Parliamentary Friendship Group organized a trip to Israel-Palestine. Upon completion of the trip, the majority of MPs who participated issued a report detailing life under Israeli military and occupation. This report included witness accounts of the Israeli military’s detention of Palestinian children and issued a recommendation for the Canadian government to appoint a Special Envoy to monitor on the human rights situation of Palestinian children living in Palestinian territory. More specifically, the report called for evaluative analysis to Israeli military law and practice due to its effect on Palestinian children.

A number of Liberal MPs took part in the trip organized by the Canada-Palestine Parliamentary Friendship Group, and signed the trip’s report, which called on the Canadian government to intervene on behalf of Palestinian child detainees. It is important to note, however, that among the seven Liberal MPs who participated in the trip, two refused to sign the report.

Conservative Party

The Conservative Party’s silence on Israel’s treatment of Palestinian child detainees stands in stark contrast with the Party’s strong condemnations of the Palestinians’ detention of an Israeli. In June 2006, Hamas kidnapped 19-year old Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit who was serving his compulsory military service for Israel. He was the first Israeli soldier to be captured by Palestinians since 1994.¹²² Following his capture, in 2006, the Harper government released several robust statements urging the immediate

release of Gilad Shalit. Like this predecessor, Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer has never once condemned Israel's abuses against Palestinian children. When Ahed Tamimi was arrested by Israeli soldiers in December 2017, Scheer remained silent on the issue.¹²³

It is noteworthy that Garnett Genuis – the only Conservative MP to have participated in the trip organized by the Canada-Palestine Parliamentary Friendship Group – did not sign the report from the trip.

NDP

The NDP was by far the most vocal Canadian party on this issue. In January 2018, NDP Foreign Affairs Critic Héléne Lavardière sent a letter to Foreign Affairs Minister Freeland asserting that Ahed Tamimi's case is "one of many troubling cases of military detention of children under the Israeli occupation."¹²⁴ She noted the "widespread and systematic ill-treatment of Palestinian children in the Israeli military detention system,"¹²⁵ and urged Minister Freeland to put pressure on the Israeli government to respect the Convention on the Rights of the Child and to ensure Palestinian children's rights are being respected.¹²⁶

In general, the NDP leadership has shown a willingness to express its concern over Israel's detainment of Palestinian children. Following demonstrations near the Gaza-Israel border in May 2018, the NDP issued a statement, shared by Jagmeet Singh on his Twitter account, condemning the killings of protesters in Gaza. The statement went on to condemn Israel's occupation, including Israel's "arbitrary and abusive detention."¹²⁷

While the NDP has issued many statements condemning Israel's mistreatment of Palestinian children, NDP grassroots activists have accused the party of being reluctant to do more than express concern and failure to translate that concern into effective and concrete policy for change. Indeed, after the NDP failed to pass a resolution calling for economic pressure on Israel in February 2018, several NDP members stood on the plenary floor with signs demanding Israel release Palestinian teenager, Ahed Tamimi, from custody.

Bloc Québécois

In general, the Bloc Québécois' leadership has consistently proved supportive of efforts to stand against Israel's violations of human rights. Mario Beaulieu, former Leader of the Bloc Québécois leader, signed onto the Canada-Palestine Friendship Group's report calling on the government to monitor on the human rights situation of Palestinian children impacted by Israeli military law and practice. Moreover, he was one of three Canadian MPs to convene a press conference on Parliament Hill¹²⁸ that highlighted the important takeaways from the Parliamentary trip to Israel-Palestine. During the press conference, he expressed his concerns with the reality on the ground in the West Bank, and raised several human rights issues related to the Israeli military occupation, including the mistreatment of Palestinian children, stating that the situation is "practically apartheid."¹²⁹

Green Party






In April 2018, Green Party Leader Elizabeth May participated in the Israel-Palestine trip organized by the Canada-Palestine Parliamentary Friendship Group. Following the trip, in an official press conference, May expressed her concern for the situation of Palestinian children under Israeli military law. She furthermore shared the story of Fawzi al-Junaidi, a 17-year-old Palestinian child who was beaten in Israeli jail for throwing stones, an allegation he has continually denied.¹³⁰ Elizabeth May stated that the military courts are unreliable, with a 97% conviction rate of children between 12 and 18 who are jailed in the same prisons as adults. May subsequently signed onto the report calling on the government to monitor the human rights situation of Palestinian children impacted by Israeli military law and practices.

Through social media, Elizabeth May has also voiced her support for initiatives to end the ill-treatment of Palestinian children in Israeli military detention. In April 2018, May also shared on her twitter account a picture of herself with Bassem Tamimi, the father of Ahed Tamimi whom she stated was jailed for slapping a soldier, and declared her support for the NWTAC campaign.

8 Islamophobia / L'islamophobie

ISLAMOPHOBIA L'ISLAMOPHOBIE

Assessment / Évaluation

	Conservative Party of Canada / Parti conservateur du Canada	F
	New Democratic Party / Nouveau Parti démocratique	A
	Liberal Party of Canada / Parti libéral du Canada	B
	Bloc Québécois	F
	Green Party of Canada / Parti Vert du Canada	B-

Executive Summary

Since their election in 2015, the Liberals have issued many symbolic statements in support of Canadian Muslims and against Islamophobia. Nonetheless, the Liberals have repeatedly failed to take steps to truly combat Islamophobia. Because of this, Liberals received a B.

Meanwhile, since the last election, the NDP has worked quite hard to raise the issue of Islamophobia in Canada – receiving a strong grade in our evaluation as a result.

While the Greens purportedly oppose hatred and discrimination writ large, they have not prioritized the fight against Islamophobia.

Sommaire exécutif

Depuis les élections de 2015, les libéraux ont fait de nombreuses déclarations symboliques en faveur des musulmans canadiens et contre l'islamophobie. Néanmoins, à de nombreuses reprises, les libéraux n'ont pas pris de mesures pour lutter véritablement contre l'islamophobie. Pour cette raison, les libéraux ont reçu un B.

Entre-temps, depuis les dernières élections, le NPD a travaillé fort pour soulever la question de l'islamophobie au Canada – ce qui lui a valu une bonne note dans notre évaluation.

Bien que les verts soient censés s'opposer à la haine et à la discrimination en général, ils n'ont pas fait de la lutte contre l'islamophobie leur priorité.

Similarly, the Bloc Québécois has also failed to elevate the issue of Islamophobia in Canada and have even expressed support for Quebec Premier François Legault's Islamophobic Bill 21.

Likewise, the Conservatives have sought to deflect much-needed attention away from the problem of Islamophobia, with many CPC MPs continuing to refuse to use the term 'Islamophobia' at all.

De même, le Bloc québécois n'a pas non plus soulevé la question de l'islamophobie au Canada et a même exprimé son soutien pour le projet de loi 21 islamophobe du premier ministre du Québec, François Legault.

De la même manière, les conservateurs ont cherché à détourner l'attention du problème de l'islamophobie, et un bon nombre de leurs députés continuent de refuser d'utiliser le terme « islamophobie ».

Background

Islamophobia – an unfounded hostility toward Muslims and individuals who may be *perceived* as Muslim¹³¹– is a form of racial discrimination that remains pervasive in Canada. While Islamophobia has existed in various forms for many years, it has especially increased following 9/11 and with fear of jihadist groups like al-Shabaab and the Islamic State (ISIS). Meanwhile, right wing parties and organizations in Canada have increasingly engaged in identity politics, using Islamophobic and xenophobic rhetoric to mobilize inwardly-focused segments of the electorate. This type of rhetoric only serves to worsen perceived and imagined threats of minority growth.

There are numerous ways in which Islamophobia may be manifested, whether that be through the media's portrayal of Muslims or through hate crimes. Perhaps the most well-known manifestation of Islamophobia in Canada was the Quebec City mosque attack, which took place on January 29th, 2017. In this case, six Muslims were killed, and many others were injured. Indeed, mosques and Islamic community centres across the country have increasingly become targets of vandalism and hate crimes.¹³² Statistics Canada's recent police-reported hate crimes report revealed that of all targeted groups, Canadian Muslims have experienced the highest increase in hate crimes over the 2016-2017 period.¹³³ In February 2018, the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage released the M-103 report, replete with recommendations. One of the recommendations in the report was for the government to develop a national, concrete action plan to tackle Islamophobia in Canada. Additionally, many Canadian Muslims continue to face discrimination from government institutions in terms of access to employment. In June, for example, the Quebec government passed Bill 21, formally banning individuals in the public sector from wearing religious symbols or clothing.¹³⁴

Liberal Position

The Liberal Party under Justin Trudeau has acknowledged Islamophobia as an important problem and has proven supportive of efforts to tackle it. Trudeau himself has consistently condemned hate crimes against Muslim Canadians. For instance, in 2015, following a rise in incidents of racial abuse and discrimination towards Muslims, Trudeau stated that "these recent acts of intolerance have no place in our country and run absolutely contrary to Canadian values of pluralism and respect."¹³⁵ Liberal MPs also voted in favor of two separate motions condemning Islamophobia in 2016.¹³⁶

While the Liberals' swift condemnation of Islamophobia is laudable, the Trudeau government has been slow to take substantive, meaningful action on this file. For example, while Liberal MP Frank Baylis sponsored Parliamentary petition E-411 against Islamophobia¹³⁷, it was in fact then- NDP leader Thomas Mulcair who introduced the petition in Parliament on October 2016. Only months later did the Trudeau government pass a similar motion – motion M-103 – condemning Islamophobia and all other forms of systemic racism. The following year, the Standing Committee of Canadian Heritage released the M-103 report and its recommendations. The report encouraged the government to develop a national, concrete action plan to tackle the problem of Islamophobia in Canada. It also recommended that the government commemorate January 29th as a National Day of Action and Remembrance on Islamophobia. The Liberals, however, have failed to implement these recommendations—even the symbolic ones, such as the commemoration of January 29th.

Finally, while Trudeau's rhetoric against Islamophobia should be recognized, it must not be forgotten that Trudeau supported the Conservative government's "anti-terrorism" bill, known as [Bill C-51](#).¹³⁸ This intrusive law disproportionately affected Muslims and Middle Eastern people, the main groups accused of terrorism in the West. Despite Trudeau's promises to make substantial amendments to this bill, he failed to adequately correct portions of the law that disproportionately affect Muslim Canadians.

Conservative Position

The Conservative Party has long been unsupportive of efforts to tackle Islamophobia and has even consistently denied the pervasiveness of Islamophobia in Canada. Under Stephen Harper, the Conservatives routinely engaged in dangerous rhetoric that merely served to amplify Islamophobic sentiments. Harper opposed niqabs (a veil that some Muslim women wear over their face) at citizenship ceremonies, even declaring on multiple occasions that the niqab "is rooted in a culture that is anti-women."¹³⁹ He also set up a hotline for individuals to report the "barbaric cultural practices" of their fellow Canadians, which clearly targeted Canadian Muslims and those perceived to be Muslim.¹⁴⁰

The Conservative party under current Leader Andrew Scheer has not departed significantly from the example set by the previous Conservative government. In October 2016, Conservative MPs blocked unanimous consent on a motion condemning all forms of Islamophobia.¹⁴¹ In February 2017, when M-103 was debated in the House, Conservative MPs made arguments against the motion, denying the need to dedicate a motion to the fight against Islamophobia. The Conservatives even argued against the use of the term 'Islamophobia.'¹⁴² In February 2018, the Conservative Party released its M-103 Minority Report, which contained numerous suggestions, including one recommendation "that the Government of Canada cease using the term 'Islamophobia' because of its inability to agree on the specific definition of the term."¹⁴³

Following a mass shooting at a mosque in New Zealand in 2019, Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer failed to use the word 'Islamophobia' in his condemnation of the attack. Scheer was largely criticized for his banal characterization of the situation as an attack on "freedom," rather than an attack on Muslims.¹⁴⁴

In April 2019, Conservative MP Scott Reid introduced Motion M-153, which sought to designate January 29 as a "National Day of Solidarity with Victims of Anti-religious Bigotry and Violence." While his motion appears to honour the victims of the Quebec City mosque attack, it instead fails to address the

Islamophobia that motivated the attack in the first place. Rather, the motion dilutes the significance of January 29th by grouping it with several dissimilar violent incidents from Canadian history. Overall, this motion is disappointing as it appears to intentionally detract from the threat of Islamophobia in Canada.

NDP Position

The NDP has remained consistently supportive of efforts to address Islamophobia, and has repeatedly acknowledged the need to tackle Islamophobia through concrete action. Under the leadership of Thomas Mulcair, the NDP presented an anti-Islamophobia motion in the House, and the motion was passed on October 26, 2016. When Conservative MPs prevented unanimous consent on a previous motion condemning all forms of Islamophobia in 2016, Mulcair expressed his dismay, stating: "I can't see how anybody can speak out against a motion that seeks to condemn a form of hatred."¹⁴⁵

The NDP voted in favor of M-103 and even came out in support of CJPME's campaign to commemorate January 29th as a National Day of Action and Remembrance on Islamophobia. In parallel, the Party's Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Critic Jenny Kwan has repeatedly pointed to the rise in hate crimes towards Muslims since 2014.¹⁴⁶ For his part, NDP leader Jagmeet Singh has personally condemned Islamophobia on numerous occasions and has been quick to issue statements in the wake of Islamophobic attacks in Canada, such as the arson attack at the Alberta's Edson Mosque in 2018.

Bloc Québécois Position

Although former Bloc Québécois leader Yves-François Blanchet has condemned Islamophobia on multiple occasions, he has admitted to having reservations about the importance of a "National Day of Remembrance and Action on Islamophobia." He stated that all hate crimes must be denounced and that it was not rational to highlight hate crimes towards a particular religion. In adopting this rhetoric, the party fails to acknowledge the well-documented rise in hate crimes towards Muslims and thereby minimizes the increasing threat of Islamophobia. Yves-Francois Blanchet further stated that the word Islamophobia is "now loaded with a toxic political weight" given partisan division on the matter He has claimed that a national day against Islamophobia risks sewing more division.¹⁴⁷

Most significantly, the Bloc Québécois has declared its support for the Quebec government's discriminatory and Islamophobic Bill 21, which bans teachers, police and other government employees from wearing religious symbols.¹⁴⁸ The Bill violates the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and unfairly persecutes religious minorities, especially Muslim Canadian women wearing a hijab. Blanchet went so far as to write a letter to fellow MPs in which he explained the supposed merits of Bill 21, claiming the bill will protect Quebec's secular identity.

Green Position

In January 2018, the Green Party of Canada expressed its support for a National Day of Remembrance and Action on Islamophobia on the anniversary of the Quebec City Mosque massacre.¹⁴⁹

Green Party Leader Elizabeth May also acknowledged the increasing threat of Islamophobia: "The growth of far-right movements across North America and in other Western countries threatens the safety of






anyone deemed – through the colour of their skin, their accent, their attire, or their beliefs – to be unwelcome.”¹⁵⁰

In general, however, Elizabeth May has not made it a point to prioritize condemnations of Islamophobic hate crimes occurring throughout Canada. For example, May voted for the Conservative amendment to M-103, which sought to dilute the motion by removing the term "Islamophobia." In this way, though Elizabeth May clearly opposes religious discrimination, she has been hesitant to dedicate attention to combatting the specific challenge of Islamophobia in Canada.¹⁵¹

9 Trump's pro-Israel Actions / Les actions de Trump concernant Israël

TRUMP'S PRO-ISRAEL ACTIONS LES ACTIONS DE TRUMP CONCERNANT ISRAËL

Assessment / Évaluation

 Conservative Party of Canada / Parti conservateur du Canada	F
 New Democratic Party / Nouveau Parti démocratique	A-
 Liberal Party of Canada / Parti libéral du Canada	B-
 Bloc Québécois	n/a
 Green Party of Canada / Parti Vert du Canada	B

Executive Summary

Of all the major Canadian political parties, the NDP fared best, given their consistent condemnations of Donald Trump's chaotic pronouncements related to Israel-Palestine.

While the Greens were particularly outspoken against Trump's Jerusalem decree, they failed to speak up for Palestinian refugees, and failed to address Trump's attempt to legitimize Israel's illegal territorial ambitions.

The Liberal Party received a moderate score, as they failed to condemn Trump's Jerusalem decision, yet did speak out against Trump's Golan Heights decree and maintained essential Canadian funding to Palestinian refugees.

Sommaire exécutif

De tous les grands partis politiques canadiens, le NPD a eu la meilleure note, compte tenu de ses condamnations constantes des déclarations chaotiques de Donald Trump concernant Israël et la Palestine.

Bien que les verts se soient prononcés ouvertement contre le décret de Trump sur Jérusalem, ils n'ont pas défendu les réfugiés palestiniens, et n'ont pas abordé la tentative de Trump de légitimer les ambitions territoriales illégales d'Israël.

Le Parti libéral a reçu une note moyenne, étant donné qu'il n'a pas condamné la décision de Trump sur Jérusalem, mais a condamné le décret

Overall, the Conservative Party is far too welcoming of Trump's destructive Israel-Palestine policies, having already adopted the Trump administration's position on Jerusalem and Palestinian refugees.

The BQ did not receive a grade as CJPME was unable to find specific statements on this file.

de Trump sur les hauteurs du Golan et a maintenu le financement canadien essentiel aux réfugiés palestiniens.

Dans l'ensemble, le Parti conservateur est beaucoup trop favorable aux politiques destructrices de Trump sur Israël et la Palestine, ayant déjà adopté la position de l'administration Trump sur Jérusalem et les réfugiés palestiniens.

Le BQ n'a pas reçu de note, car CJPME n'a trouvé aucune déclaration de ce dernier sur le sujet.

Background

Since his election in 2016, US President Donald Trump has made a series of surprising and destabilizing decisions concerning Palestine-Israel – decisions which contravene international law and reverse decades of historic American foreign policy. Human rights defenders have pointed out that Trump's one-sided approach to Palestine-Israel makes a mockery of US attempts to act as honest-broker in negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. Some of Trump's most scrutinized actions in Palestine-Israel include the following:

Bucking law and international convention on Jerusalem: In December 2017, President Trump announced that the United States would recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and ordered the relocation of the US embassy from Tel-Aviv to Jerusalem. Trump's decree on Jerusalem ignores countless UN resolutions, notably Security Council Resolution 478 (1980), which called on all UN members to withdraw diplomatic missions from Jerusalem. Israel seized control of East Jerusalem illegally in 1967 and has since then "annexed" and colonized the territory – despite several condemnations from the UN, human rights organizations, and countries around the world.¹⁵² Analysts of the Israel-Palestine conflict have long considered Jerusalem to be a "final status issue" in that it will only be resolved through a negotiated settlement. Trump's move, however, serves to legitimize Israel's continued occupation of East Jerusalem. It also rewards Israel without demanding any concessions in return, which underscores just how biased Trump's approach is.

Scuttling relations with the Palestinian leadership: Donald Trump began scuttling relations with Palestinian leadership when he recognized Israel's claim to Jerusalem and cancelled funding to Palestinian refugees. However, Trump went one step further in September 2018 when he decided to close down the PLO office in Washington, effectively expelling the Palestinian political leadership from the United States. The American government justified its decision by citing concerns regarding PLO efforts to prompt an investigation of Israel by the International Criminal Court (ICC). Trump further alienated the Palestinian leadership by developing a peace "deal" without any involvement by the Palestinians.

Abandoning Palestinian refugees: The US has long been the most generous contributor to UNRWA - the UN aid agency that provides health, education and development services to over 5 million Palestinian

refugees. Year after year, the US typically provided about one third of UNRWA's overall working budget. The Trump administration, however, cut all funding to UNRWA in 2018, accusing the organization of mismanaging funds and perpetuating the refugee status of Palestinians.

Legitimizing Israel's illegal territorial ambitions: Since Trump's election, the American government has legitimized illegal Israeli territorial ambitions in the occupied Palestinian and Syrian territories. For example, in March 2019, Trump became the first world leader to recognize Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights, Syrian territory occupied and illegally colonized by Israel since 1967. Shortly afterward, in June 2019, US Ambassador to Israel David Friedman expressed support for a possible Israeli annexation of the occupied Palestinian territories, stating that "Israel has the right to retain some...of the West Bank."¹⁵³

Liberal Position

The Liberal Party under the leadership of Justin Trudeau has taken an extremely cautious approach to Trump's Israel-Palestine decisions. With regards to the US embassy move, the Trudeau government remained quiet about the American decision to move its embassy, meanwhile reassuring Canadians that the Canadian embassy would remain in Tel-Aviv.¹⁵⁴ Despite Canada's statement, the Liberal government voted against an UN General Assembly resolution condemning Trump's decree.¹⁵⁵

In late 2018, the Trudeau government announced it would be renewing its \$50-million funding commitment to Palestinian refugee after US President Trump cut American funding to the UN aid agency.¹⁵⁶ While the Trudeau government sought to position the announcement as new funding in wake of Trump's cuts to Palestinian refugees, it was unclear whether the funding wasn't merely a repackaging of existing Canadian commitments to Palestinian refugees.

While the Liberals have remained quiet on statements made by US officials about West Bank annexation, the Liberals did issue a statement opposing Trump's recognition of Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights. In March 2019, Global Affairs Canada stated that "Canada does not recognize permanent Israeli control over the Golan Heights" and that "annexation of territory by force is prohibited under international law."¹⁵⁷

Conservative Position

The Conservative Party has supported – and even adopted – many of US President Donald Trump's positions on Israel-Palestine. One such example is the US government's decision to move the American embassy to Jerusalem. Echoing Trump's decision, in February 2018, Conservative Party leader Andrew Scheer vowed to relocate the Canadian Embassy to Jerusalem,¹⁵⁸ breaking with decades of international consensus. This promise also breaks with long-standing official Canadian policy on Israel-Palestine, which has never recognized Israel's illegal annexation of East Jerusalem. Scheer further vowed to recognize Jerusalem, including occupied East Jerusalem, as Israel's capital, after suggesting that Israel had "liberated" the old city of Jerusalem (i.e. East Jerusalem).¹⁵⁹ In August 2018, the majority of the Conservative Party membership voted in favour of adopting a resolution that recognizes Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and calls for Canada to move its embassy from Tel-Aviv to Jerusalem.¹⁶⁰

Conservatives hailed Trump's decision to cancel American funding to UNRWA in 2018, after lambasting the Trudeau government for reinstating Canadian funding to UNRWA¹⁶¹ cut by the Harper government. Conservative MPs have continually sought to smear UNRWA's reputation, calling for an end to Canadian funding to the organization.¹⁶² In fact, as recently as July 2019, Andrew Scheer announced that if elected, a Conservative government will effectively withhold all funding to the aid agency.¹⁶³

While there are no Conservative statements in support of Israel's illegal territorial ambitions, the Conservatives often fail to recognize international law concerning Israel's colonies in the oPt, opting to use the term "contested settlements" rather than "illegal settlements" as defined by numerous UN Security Council resolutions.¹⁶⁴

NDP Position

Most of the NDP's positions with regards to Trump's decisions towards Israel-Palestine are based on international law and long-standing international and Canadian convention. Concerning Trump's Jerusalem decision, the NDP immediately condemned the move and warned against the Conservative Party's aspirations to "copy Donald Trump's foreign policy," on Israel-Palestine.¹⁶⁵ The NDP Foreign Affairs Critic Hélène Laverdière strongly urged the Trudeau government to condemn Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.¹⁶⁶

On the UNRWA file, during the Harper years, the NDP was very active in calling on for the reinstatement of Canadian funding, citing UNRWA's status as a lifeline for many Palestinian refugees.¹⁶⁷ Speaking to the importance of maintaining support for UNRWA, Laverdière rebuked Trump's "retreat from multilateralism" on the international stage.¹⁶⁸

When Trump recognized Israeli sovereignty over the occupied Golan Heights, NDP leader Jagmeet Singh was quick to tweet a response opposing the move as a contravention of international law, calling on the Trudeau government to condemn this decision.¹⁶⁹

Bloc Québécois Position

While the BQ has not issued any formal statements opposing Trump's destructive decisions on Israel-Palestine, BQ MPs have occasionally expressed their opposition to foreign embassies in Jerusalem and illegal Israeli territorial ambitions.¹⁷⁰

Green Position






The Green Party of Canada under the leadership of Elizabeth May has repeatedly condemned American support for Israel's human rights abuses against Palestinians and violations of international law. The Green Party condemned Trump's decision to relocate the US embassy to Jerusalem, citing international law and consensus, while criticizing the Trudeau government for its inaction on this file.¹⁷¹

CJPME was unable to find any other Green Party statements on Trump's other destabilizing decrees on Israel-Palestine.

10 The Yemen Crisis / La crise au Yémen

RESPONSE TO YEMEN CRISIS LA CRISE AU YÉMEN

Assessment / Évaluation

 Conservative Party of Canada / Parti conservateur du Canada	F
 New Democratic Party / Nouveau Parti démocratique	A
 Liberal Party of Canada / Parti libéral du Canada	D-
 Bloc Québécois	B+
 Green Party of Canada / Parti Vert du Canada	B+

Executive Summary

Despite the dire humanitarian crisis created by the civil war in Yemen, driven largely by the Saudi-led coalition, the Conservative Party has refused to prioritize humanitarian concern over economic gain in relations with the belligerent Saudi Kingdom.

In terms of arming the Saudis, the Liberals have not been better than the Conservatives, although they have given humanitarian aid for the humanitarian crisis in Yemen. As a result, the parties have received failing and near-failing scores.

While the Bloc Québécois and the Greens have not prioritized the Yemen Crisis, their responses have been consistent with international law and

Sommaire exécutif

Malgré la terrible crise humanitaire créée par la guerre civile au Yémen, menée en grande partie par la coalition dirigée par les Saoudiens, le Parti conservateur a refusé de donner la priorité aux préoccupations humanitaires sur les gains économiques dans ses relations avec le Royaume saoudien.

En ce qui concerne l'armement des Saoudiens, les libéraux n'ont pas été meilleurs que les conservateurs, bien qu'ils aient fourni une aide humanitaire pour la crise humanitaire au Yémen. En conséquence, les parties ont reçu des notes d'échec et de quasi-échec.

natural humanitarian concern. Hence, their scores are relatively strong.

The NDP stands out among all the parties, as it has been the most consistent voice calling for the respect of Yemeni human and humanitarian rights and an end to Canada's arms deal with Saudi Arabia.

Bien que le Bloc québécois et les verts n'aient pas accordé la priorité à la crise du Yémen, leurs réponses ont été consistantes avec le droit international et les inquiétudes humanitaires. Ainsi, leurs notes sont assez élevées.

Le NPD se démarque des autres partis, étant donné qu'il s'est exprimé sur le sujet à de nombreuses reprises, demandant le respect des Yéménites et des droits humanitaires et la fin du commerce d'armes du Canada à l'Arabie saoudite.

Background

The origins of Yemen's current crisis can be found in the Arab Spring of 2011, when long-time authoritarian leader Ali Abdullah Saleh was forced to step down and transfer power to his deputy, Abrabbuh Mansour Hadi. Not long after Hadi became president, however, the separatist Houthi movement began to take control of Northern Yemen, with significant support from the Yemeni population. The Hadi government and the Houthis engaged in a series of violent clashes which ultimately led to the eruption of civil war in Yemen. In March 2015, amidst increasing Houthi territorial gains, Hadi fled to Saudi Arabia.¹⁷²

Given the extensive border between Saudi Arabia and Yemen, the Saudis have enjoyed a long tradition of involvement in Yemeni politics. The Yemeni civil war has been no exception, with Saudi Arabia intervening on behalf of the Hadi government against the Houthis. The Saudis launched a military campaign in Yemen in 2015 after accusing Iran of providing military assistance to the Houthi rebel militia. Many have described the situation as a proxy-war between Saudi Arabia and Iran, as they vie for control of the region.¹⁷³ Saudi Arabia's military campaign has had catastrophic consequences on Yemen; Saudi strikes are responsible for thousands of Yemeni civilian deaths and its blockade of the country has spurred one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world, with over three quarters of Yemen's total population in dire need of humanitarian aid.¹⁷⁴

The Canadian government has been inconsistent in its approach to Yemen. On the one hand, Canada has pledged millions in humanitarian aid for Yemen, most recently committing \$46.7 million in February 2019.¹⁷⁵ On the other hand, however, Canada has also continued to sell arms to Saudi Arabia, fuelling the regime's assault on Yemen. There is ample risk and some evidence that these Canadian-made arms could be used by the Saudis in Yemen.¹⁷⁶ In addition, there is evidence that Saudi Arabia has used Canadian or similar vehicles to violently quell civilian unrest in parts of the country.

CJPME has long pushed for an immediate end to the Saudi coalition airstrikes as well as all other foreign intervention, a brokered end to the war, and international aid. CJPME has also called for an arms embargo on all parties involved in the conflict, which include Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the UAE, Iran, and others.

Liberal Position

The Liberal government's approach to the crisis in Yemen has been contradictory and, arguably, ineffective. On one hand, since 2015, the Liberals have provided over \$150 million in aid to ease the humanitarian crisis in Yemen. They have, on numerous occasions, reiterated that "the human cost of the ongoing conflict in Yemen is dire."¹⁷⁷ On the other hand, however, they have also approved more than \$284 million in exports of Canadian arms to the countries bombing Yemen.¹⁷⁸ Despite evidence of Canadian-made arms being used by the Saudis in Yemen, the Liberal government has maintained arms exports to the Saudis, all while claiming to be a champion of human rights. The only time the Liberal government has wavered in its support for arms sales to Saudi Arabia was following the gruesome murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi. In the wake of Khashoggi's murder, Prime Minister Trudeau announced that he was looking into ways to cancel the government's arms contract with Saudi Arabia.¹⁷⁹ As of September 2019, the Trudeau government has yet to take action towards cancelling the deal.

At the beginning of Trudeau's mandate, when Stéphane Dion was Foreign Affairs Minister, the Liberal government issued much bolder statements denouncing Saudi Arabia's actions in Yemen.¹⁸⁰ Current Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland has taken a much more tepid approach, occasionally calling for a ceasefire¹⁸¹ and de-escalation of violence,¹⁸² yet failing to condemn the parties involved. This unwillingness to openly criticize the Saudi-led coalition points back to the Liberal government's prioritization of economic gains over human rights.

Conservative Position

Under the leadership of Andrew Scheer, the Conservative Party has denounced both Saudi Arabia and Iran for their role in perpetuating the conflict in Yemen. Although the Conservatives have been quick to condemn the Saudis, they have also continued to emphasize the need to maintain "strategic cooperation" with the Saudi monarchy.¹⁸³

It is noteworthy to recall that former Prime Minister Stephen Harper okayed the \$15 billion-dollar arms deal with Saudi Arabia—a contract that remains in effect today. While it is true that the Saudis were not yet besieging Yemen in 2014 when the deal was struck, Saudi Arabia's domestic human rights abuses are no secret. Sadly, Andrew Scheer has repeatedly said that he would not cancel the arms deal if elected—this, despite the widespread evidence of Saudi human rights abuses at home and in Yemen.¹⁸⁴ The Conservative's willingness to go through with the arms deal demonstrates the party's willingness to place economic gain above human rights.

NDP Position

The NDP has consistently criticized the Canadian government's arms exports to Saudi Arabia, pointing out that the Saudis are responsible for a "war-induced famine that threatens the starvation deaths of 14 million people in Yemen."¹⁸⁵

Foreign Affairs Critic Hélène Laverdière has posed endless questions to the government in the House of Commons and issued multiple statements calling on the Canadian government to couple its humanitarian assistance to Yemen with an arms embargo on Saudi Arabia.¹⁸⁶ NDP Foreign Affairs Critic Guy Caron continued this approach, criticizing the Liberal government's incoherent response to the crisis in Yemen. Caron has also pointed out the futility of sending humanitarian aid to Yemen, while also providing arms to the belligerents.¹⁸⁷

Bloc Québécois Position

While the Bloc has not made Yemen a priority issue, it has nonetheless maintained a principled position on the crisis. There are several instances over the past few years in which Bloc MPs have condemned Saudi Arabia for its disregard for civilian life in Yemen. The Bloc has also repeatedly called for an end to Canadian arms sales to Saudi Arabia.¹⁸⁸

Green Position

Like the Bloc Québécois, Elizabeth May and the Greens have not prioritized the Yemen crisis, yet have maintained a principled stance on the matter. May has made numerous statements in support of Yemeni human rights. On more than one occasion, she has also criticized Canadian military exports to Saudi Arabia in the House of Commons. Indeed, the party has long called for an arms embargo on Saudi Arabia over the deteriorating situation in Yemen.¹⁸⁹

11 Palestine-Israel: Conflict and Negotiations / Palestine-Israël: Conflit et négociations

PALESTINE-ISRAEL: CONFLICT AND NEGOTIATIONS PALESTINE-ISRAËL : CONFLIT ET NÉGOCIATIONS

Assessment / Évaluation

 Conservative Party of Canada / Parti conservateur du Canada	F
 New Democratic Party / Nouveau Parti démocratique	B
 Liberal Party of Canada / Parti libéral du Canada	C-
 Bloc Québécois	A-
 Green Party of Canada / Parti Vert du Canada	B+

Executive Summary

While all of Canada's major political parties explicitly support a two-state solution in Palestine-Israel, some parties are more vocal than others in their support of a just and comprehensive conclusion to the conflict.

The Green Party received the highest mark on this evaluation, given its relatively consistent condemnation of Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories, and its willingness to propose pressure tactics against Israel.

The Bloc Québécois (BQ), has also tried to use its limited influence in the House of Commons to push this issue.

Sommaire exécutif

Bien que tous les principaux partis politiques du Canada appuient explicitement une solution à deux États pour le conflit israélo-palestinien, certains partis s'expriment d'avantage que d'autres en faveur d'une conclusion juste et globale du conflit.

Le Parti vert a eu la note la plus élevée dans cette évaluation, compte tenu de sa condamnation systématique de l'occupation des Territoires palestiniens et de sa volonté à proposer des moyens de pression sur Israël.

Le Bloc québécois (BQ) a également essayé d'utiliser son influence limitée dans la Chambre

In the absence of a long-term solution, the NDP continues to call out Israel's violations of international law.

While the Liberals repeatedly express their support for a two-state solution, they have rarely expressed any support for Palestinian human rights, even voting with Israel against resolutions based in international law at the UN.

Likewise, the Conservative Party has largely refused to criticize Israel or value Palestinian human rights as much as it values Israel's "security."

CJPME looked at each party's statements relating to their 1) urgency for a solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict; and, 2) support for Palestinian self-determination. Furthermore, the parties' statements were judged on their adherence to international law. It should be noted that CJPME itself does not take a position on the viability of a two-state solution.

des communes pour mettre en avant ce problème.

En l'absence d'une solution à long-terme, le NPD continue de dénoncer les violations du droit international par Israël.

Bien que les libéraux ont exprimé à maintes reprises leur appui à une solution à deux États, ils ont rarement exprimé leur appui aux droits de la personne des Palestiniens, et ont même voté avec Israël contre les résolutions fondées sur le droit international à l'ONU.

De même, le Parti conservateur a largement refusé de critiquer Israël ou de donner autant d'importance aux droits de la personne des Palestiniens qu'à la « sécurité » d'Israël.

CJPMO a examiné les déclarations de chaque parti concernant 1) l'urgence de trouver une solution au conflit israélo-palestinien; et 2) le soutien à l'autodétermination palestinienne. De plus, les déclarations des partis ont été jugées sur leur respect du droit international. Il est à noter que CJPMO ne prend pas elle-même position sur la viabilité d'une solution à deux États.

Background

In July 2013, US-sponsored talks between Israeli and Palestinian representatives resumed after a four-year hiatus. The preconditions for the talks included a settlement freeze and a prisoner release by Israel, in exchange for the Palestinians' assurance that they would hold off on pursuing membership at the UN. The meetings began in the summer of 2013, and sought to discuss a number of issues: land, borders, "settlements," the future of Jerusalem, refugees, and security.

Less than a year later, in April 2014, Israel announced its withdrawal from the talks. In the intervening years, the list of problems preventing future talks has only grown. Therefore, the best way for Canada to encourage a just solution to the conflict is to take positions firmly grounded in international law on the following issues:

Settlement expansion: The single most significant factor preventing progress is Israel's intensification of "settlement" construction in the occupied Palestinian territories (OPT). Israel has installed over 600,000 colonists in the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) in direct violation of article 49(6) of the Fourth Geneva Convention. So Israel's settlement enterprise violates international law and breaches one of the

preconditions set by the Palestinians for peace talks. The continued expansion of these illegal settlements also makes a contiguous Palestinian state virtually impossible.

Jerusalem: The international consensus is that Jerusalem's status should only be decided as part of a final peace negotiation. Any unilateral action recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel or Palestine simply undermines the peace process, shows prejudice, removes incentives to negotiate, and makes it harder to restart peace talks.

Israeli military violence against Palestinians: During the peace talks in 2013, the Israeli military killed 61 Palestinians, injured another 1,100, and detained nearly 4000.¹⁹⁰ During the Great March of Return protests that erupted in March of 2018, Israel used an even greater degree of violence against Palestinians. Over 150 Palestinians in Gaza were killed and 10,000 injured within 6 months during the March.¹⁹¹ Israel's indiscriminate and disproportionate use of violence, combined with the international community's silence vis-à-vis this violence, has made Palestinians skeptical of the utility of peace talks.

Support for justice and peace at the UN: Canada has voted against Palestinian membership at the UN on numerous occasions. Moreover, under the Harper and Trudeau governments, Canada has repeatedly marginalized itself at the UN by voting alongside a small minority of US client states, instead of voting in accordance with international law. For example, year after year, Canada has been voting against UN resolutions calling for a peaceful end to the conflict, respect for international law, and assistance to Palestinian refugees. Changing this voting pattern at the UN would be one of the best ways for Canada to demonstrate its support for a principled and peaceful solution to the conflict.

Liberal Position

The Trudeau government's position has been passive in a manner that bolsters an anti-Palestinian status quo. Prior to his election, Trudeau appeared to be more supportive of a just solution than the Harper government. However, supportive statements have dwindled and there has been no action on the issue. The Trudeau government's unprincipled voting pattern at the UN do not indicate that a just peace in Israel-Palestine is a priority for the Liberals.

In December 2017, the Trump administration announced its decision to move the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, bucking international convention. In response, Trudeau made it clear that Canada's embassy in Israel would remain in Tel Aviv. Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland reiterated this position, reaffirming Canada's longheld position that the status of Jerusalem could only be resolved through peace negotiations.¹⁹² Despite all of these principled statements, Canada went on to abstain from the UN vote condemning the US' unilateral move.¹⁹³

Liberal statements on other issues related to Palestine-Israel have been equally lackluster. During the 2018 Great March of Return protests in Gaza, Chrystia Freeland expressed concern, tweeting: "It is inexcusable that civilians, journalists + children have been victims".¹⁹⁴ She did not lay blame on either side, despite evidence of Israel's disproportionate use of violence: over 150 Palestinians were killed (including civilians), while only one Israeli soldier died in an unrelated incident during that same period. This unwillingness to recognize the asymmetrical nature of the conflict represents an obstacle to the peace process, as disproportionate violence of any kind can discourage openness to further talks.

Trudeau himself was a bit more forceful with his words, and even called for an independent investigation after Tarek Loubani, a Canadian doctor, was injured in the protests. Trudeau said, “Reported use of excessive force and live ammunition is inexcusable. It is imperative we establish the facts of what is happening in Gaza. Canada calls for an immediate independent investigation”¹⁹⁵. He then addressed the two-state solution directly, saying that a two-state solution “that is mutually agreed by both” Israel and Palestine was the way to put an end to the violence.¹⁹⁶ However, his words ring hollow as the Liberal government has not taken any action toward facilitating a two-state solution.

The best example of Trudeau’s support for the status quo is Canada’s voting record at the UN. Unlike most of his Liberal predecessors, Trudeau has maintained Harper’s voting patterns, voting in lockstep with the US against any resolution that criticizes Israel.^{197, 198, 199} The Trudeau government has also voted against resolutions supporting Palestinians’ right to self-determination.

Conservative Position

Under the Harper Government, the Conservative Party lent unconditional support to Israel, even in the face of continued illegal settlement expansion. On paper, the Conservatives endorse a two-state solution. However, since the last election, the Conservative Party has continued to support positions that run counter to a just solution, whether “two-state” or otherwise.

In 2018, Andrew Scheer pledged to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel if elected in 2019.²⁰⁰ While Jerusalem and Tel Aviv are barely an hour apart, this move would be highly symbolic. The long-held international consensus is that Jerusalem’s status can only be resolved through a comprehensive peace deal in which both sides agree to its status. The Conservatives’ willingness to move the Canadian embassy to Jerusalem demonstrates their desire to bypass key steps in the peace process, and their lack of concern about international law.

Following Trudeau’s condemnation of Israeli killings of Palestinian protestors in Gaza during the summer of 2018, Conservative MP Garnett Genuis tried to pass a motion to “condemn statements by governments which imply Israeli responsibility for the violence on Israel’s border and statements which imply the inadequacy of Israel’s capacity for self-assessment.”²⁰¹ The Conservative Party has actively sought to quash criticism of Israel and minimize Israel’s i abuses against Palestinian civilians.²⁰² While it claims to support a two-state solution, the party’s statements and promises paint a very different picture.

NDP Position

It is fair to say that the NDP has been generally supportive of a just solution in Palestine-Israel over the past several elections. The NDP’s 2018 policy stated: “New Democrats believe in working with partners for peace in Israel and Palestine, respecting UN resolutions and international law, supporting peaceful co-existence in viable, independent states with agreed-upon borders, an end to Israeli occupation of Palestinian land, and an end to violence targeting civilians.”²⁰³ This position is nominally stronger than the stance taken in both their 2011 platform and their 2015 platform.

In 2018, internal party politics led to division over the “Palestine resolution” – a resolution that proposed banning Israeli settlement products from Canada in order to end the occupation and precipitate a just resolution to the conflict. During the convention, individual NDP leaders came out with strong statements supporting an end to the conflict and respect for international law.²⁰⁴

Speaking on Israel-Palestine, NDP MP Niki Ashton stated that “one must speak out in the face of injustice,” and that Canada must “return to its traditional role, supporting a balanced position and just peace in the Middle East.”²⁰⁵ MP Alexandre Boulerice has also been vocal on this issue, criticizing the Liberal government on multiple occasions for its failure to condemn Israel’s human rights abuses.²⁰⁶ Moreover, former Foreign Affairs Critic Hélène Laverdière has repeatedly written Minister Freeland to critique the Liberal government’s enduring silence on Israeli human rights abuses.²⁰⁷ Overall, the party has been more consistently supportive of a resolution rooted in international law than the Conservatives or Liberals.

Bloc Québécois Position

In 2017, the Bloc Québécois sponsored a resolution calling for the recognition of an independent State of Palestine. Martine Ouellet, then-leader of the BQ, said, “There are already 136 countries out of the 193 at the UN that recognize the state of Palestine and if we want to restart the peace process, there must be even more countries that recognize it.”²⁰⁸ Mario Beaulieu, a BQ MP, condemned inaction on the issue, saying, “If we let the situation rot like that, I think we let terrorism develop... sometimes you have to stand up for peace.”²⁰⁹

Green Position

The Green Party platform, *Vision Green*, outlines the party’s support for a resolution of the Israel-Palestine conflict that addresses the security, economic, and religious concerns of both sides.²¹⁰ The document enshrines Green support for UN resolutions calling for an end to the conflict, the end of violence against civilians, and the negotiation of a peaceful solution.²¹¹ The party also passed an addendum during its 2016 Convention that makes their Israel-Palestine policy more explicit. The policy calls on the government to take non-violent action in the absence of peace negotiations, including: proper labelling of products produced in the oPt, exclusion of those products from CIFTA, and government divestment from activities that profit from the occupation, among other measures.²¹²

Finally, Elizabeth May herself has occasionally urged action on a negotiated solution following her trip to Israel and the West Bank. While there, she says she witnessed the inequality faced by the residents of the OPT and condemned the “project” of colonialism that underpins Israel’s settlement enterprise. She also decried the “military dictatorship that governs every single waking and sleeping moment of Palestinians” living in the OPT.²¹³

12 Response to Egypt's Human Rights Abuses / Réponse aux abus de l'Égypte

RESPONSE TO EGYPT'S HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES RÉPONSE AUX ABUS DE L'ÉGYPTÉ

Assessment / Évaluation

 Conservative Party of Canada / Parti conservateur du Canada	D
 New Democratic Party / Nouveau Parti démocratique	B
 Liberal Party of Canada / Parti libéral du Canada	D
 Bloc Québécois	n/a
 Green Party of Canada / Parti Vert du Canada	n/a

Executive Summary

While the Liberals were critical in the past of Egypt's detention of Canadian citizens, since Trudeau's election, the Liberal government has failed to speak out against any of Egypt's human rights violations.

Likewise, the Conservatives have continued to prioritize supposed "stability" over human rights, remaining tight-lipped on Egypt's widespread abuses.

The NDP is the sole party which has vocally condemned Egypt's repression of civil liberties,

Sommaire

Bien que les libéraux aient critiqué dans le passé la détention de citoyens canadiens par l'Égypte, depuis l'élection de Trudeau, le gouvernement a échoué à dénoncé les violations des droits de la personne en Égypte.

De la même manière, les conservateurs ont continué à privilégier la supposée « stabilité » aux droits de la personne, et sont restés silencieux face aux abus généralisés en Égypte.

Le NPD est le seul parti qui a condamné ouvertement la répression des libertés civiles en

mass detentions and executions, and use of torture.

While in previous years the Greens have been vocal against Egypt's detention of Canadian citizens, CJPME could find no statement on Egypt's ongoing human rights abuses. Likewise, CJPME found no response from the Bloc Québécois.

Égypte, les détentions massives et les exécutions, ainsi que le recours à la torture.

Alors qu'au cours des années précédentes, les verts se sont prononcés contre la détention de citoyens canadiens par l'Égypte, CJPME n'a trouvé aucune déclaration sur les violations continues des droits de la personne en Égypte. De même, CJPME n'a trouvé aucune déclaration du Bloc québécois.

Background

In July 2013, a series of military-orchestrated events culminated in a military coup which ousted democratically-elected Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi and established General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi as President of Egypt in May 2014. Since el-Sisi ascended to power in Egypt, human rights organizations have documented a massive curtailment of civil rights and freedoms in Egypt. Hundreds of protestors were killed in the months following Morsi's arrest, while many others were arrested and sentenced – sometimes to death – often in mass trials.²¹⁴ Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported that the military repeatedly opened fire on protesters, killing over 1150.²¹⁵

Under El-Sisi, Egypt has been criticized at the international level for widespread human rights abuses, including repressing freedom of speech and cracking-down on activists, journalists, and the LGBTQ community. Human Rights Watch further denounced the government's security forces for their "campaign of intimidation, violence, and arrests against political opponents, civil society activists, and many others" who have criticized the government.²¹⁶ According to Human Rights Watch, since 2013 at least 60,000 people have been arrested or charged by Egyptian authorities.²¹⁷ Political detainees have been reportedly tortured, subject to solitary confinement, severe beatings, electrocution, and psychological and sexual abuse²¹⁸. Amnesty International has reported that at least 97 people have been executed in Egypt since 2014.²¹⁹ The Al Nadeem Centre for Torture Victims declared that in 2017 alone there were 1029 extrajudicial killings, 1274 forced disappearances, 347 cases of individual torture and 212 cases of collective maltreatment or torture.²²⁰

A disturbing number of Canadian citizens and permanent residents have been arbitrarily detained and subjected to severe human rights violations by El-Sisi's regime including Professor John Greyson, Dr. Tarek Loubani, journalist Mohamed Fahmy, Khaled Al-Qazzaz and other Canadians. Most recently, in February 2019, Canadian Yasser Ahmed Albaz arrived at the airport in Cairo, was deemed a "security risk," and immediately detained by Egyptian authorities.²²¹

Despite these atrocities, the Canadian government's general response to El-Sisi's human rights abuses has been to accept the status quo and adopt a posture of silence. Many Canadian citizens and civil society organizations have signed onto the Egyptian Canadian Coalition for Democracy's (ECCD) letter demanding that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau break its silence and condemn Egypt's brutal suppression of dissent.²²²

Liberal Party

Both Liberal Party Leader Justin Trudeau and Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland have yet to address, let alone condemn, the ongoing human rights crisis in Egypt.

In 2015, when Justin Trudeau was first elected, there was hope that he would take a stronger position than Stephen Harper regarding Egypt's human rights abuses. Trudeau had taken a principled position regarding Mohamed Fahmy's case and had consistently urged the Conservative government at the time to demand that Egypt immediately release the Canadian citizen. Nevertheless, the Liberal government has since failed to condemn the detainment of other Canadians in Egypt.²²³

Meanwhile, the Trudeau government continues to sell weapons to the Egyptian government,²²⁴ and fails to condemn the ongoing human rights crisis in Egypt.

Conservative Party

Under Stephen Harper, the Conservative Party turned a blind eye to the Egyptian military government's crimes. In fact, Harper's Conservative government even seemed to step up its political and military support for el-Sisi following his military coup.

Under Andrew Scheer, the Conservative Party has been less overt in its support for el-Sisi's crimes, opting to remain silent on this file. And while the Conservatives have been quick to condemn the violence perpetrated against Egypt's minority Coptic Christian population, they have failed to condemn Egypt's widespread civil and human rights violations.

NDP

The NDP has by far been the most vocal in its opposition to the human rights abuses in Egypt.

In a letter to Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland in June 2018, NDP Foreign Affairs Critic Hélène Laverdière raised serious concerns about Canada's non-response to the deteriorating human rights situation in Egypt.²²⁵ Laverdière cited widespread and systemic use of torture by Egyptian authorities as well as the use of arbitrary arrests and enforced disappearances to silence political dissent. She urged the Minister to "break the deafening silence of the Canadian government on the situation in Egypt" and called on the Canadian government to "immediately express Canada's objections to the human rights abuses perpetrated in that country."²²⁶

In February 21,st 2019 the NDP released a statement condemning the execution of nine men in Egypt, who were sentenced to the death penalty after an unfair mass trial. The statement denounced these executions as a reflection of the "gross deterioration of the human rights situation in Egypt" and highlights the Egyptian government's crackdown on human rights activists, journalists, members of the LGBTQ community, and those who publicly criticize Egypt's military dictatorship. The statement called on the Minister of Foreign Affairs to "exert pressure on Egyptian authorities to uphold human rights and the rule of law."²²⁷

Green Party

Prior to the 2015 elections, like other parties, the Green Party issued several statements condemning Egypt's arrests of Mohamed Fahmy,²²⁸ Tarek Loubani, John Greyson, and other Canadian citizens. CJPME could not find, however, any Green Party statements regarding the military coup that ousted democratically-elected President Mohamed Morsi from power, or any statement condemning the violent crackdown and human rights abuses that followed el-Sisi's rise to power.






Bloc Québécois

CJPME was unable to find statements from the Bloc regarding the Egyptian government's violations of human rights.

13 Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement / L'accord de libre-échange Canada-Israël

THE CANADA-ISRAEL FREE TRADE AGREEMENT L'ACCORD DE LIBRE-ÉCHANGE CANADA-ISRAËL

Assessment / Évaluation

 Conservative Party of Canada / Parti conservateur du Canada	F
 New Democratic Party / Nouveau Parti démocratique	A-
 Liberal Party of Canada / Parti libéral du Canada	F
 Bloc Québécois	B
 Green Party of Canada / Parti Vert du Canada	C

Executive Summary

Despite Israel's human rights abuses against Palestinians, in 2019 the Liberal government passed a "modernized" Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA). The updated agreement that lacks a human rights provision and includes products from illegal Israeli colonies (aka "settlements") in the West Bank.

The NDP for its part received a high-ranking score for its position on CIFTA, given NDP MPs' consistent efforts to speak out against CIFTA's inclusion of Israeli colony products.

Likewise, while the BQ voted to pass CIFTA, it did object to Canada's recognition of illegal Israeli colonial enterprises as part of Israel.

Sommaire

Malgré les violations aux droits de la personne commises par Israël contre les Palestiniens, en 2019 le gouvernement libéral a adopté un Accord de libre-échange Canada-Israël (ALECI) « modernisé ». L'accord actualisé ne contient pas de disposition relative aux droits de la personne et inclut les produits issus des colonies israéliennes illégales (appelées "implantations") en Cisjordanie.

Le NPD pour sa part a reçu une note élevée pour ses positions sur l'ALECI, étant donné les efforts consistants des députés du NPD pour s'exprimer contre l'inclusion par l'ALECI des produits issus des colonies israéliennes.

While Green Party policy officially compels Canada to strengthen CIFTA to bring it into compliance with international law, the Greens failed to advance this policy during CIFTA debates. It is the Green Party's silence that led to its "C" grade on this evaluation.

Finally, both the Conservatives and the Liberals received failing scores as they were not only silent on CIFTA's shortcomings, but opposed all efforts to bring CIFTA in line with international law. This explicitly undermined UNSC resolution 2334 (2016), which calls on states to distinguish between Israel and Israeli colonies in its relevant dealings.

De la même manière, bien que le BQ ait voté pour adopter l'ALECI, il s'est opposé à la reconnaissance par le Canada des colonies israéliennes comme faisant partie d'Israël.

Bien que la politique du Parti vert oblige officiellement le Canada à renforcer l'ALECI pour le rendre conforme au droit international, les Verts n'ont pas mis en avant cette politique durant les débats de l'ALECI. C'est leur silence qui leur a valu un « C » dans cette évaluation. Enfin, les conservateurs et les libéraux ont reçu des notes d'échec, non seulement parce qu'ils n'ont pas mentionné les lacunes de l'ALECI, mais aussi parce qu'ils se sont opposés à tous les efforts visant à rendre l'ALECI conforme au droit international. Cela a explicitement sapé la résolution 2334 (2016) du Conseil de sécurité des Nations unies, qui demande aux États de faire la distinction entre Israël et les colonies israéliennes dans leurs rapports avec Israël.

Background

In 1997, Canada entered into the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA), which eliminated trade tariffs on products manufactured both in Canada and Israel. In 2019, the Canadian government passed Bill C-85, which revised and modernized the 1997 agreement.²²⁹

CJPME identified the following shortcomings present in the modernized version of CIFTA:

- **CIFTA does not contain a human rights provision**, which would require both Canada and Israel to uphold the standards of international human rights and humanitarian law.
- **CIFTA allows for the application of preferential tariffs on Israeli products manufactured in illegal colonies in the occupied Palestinian territories**. At present, CIFTA defines "Israeli territory" as the "territory where its custom laws are applied." Since 1994, Israel and Palestine have been joined in a customs union. Consequently, CIFTA's definition of "Israeli territory" encompasses the occupied Palestinian territories as well. In this way, the Canadian government confers de facto legitimacy to Israeli colonies, enables their economic growth, and contributes to their permanence – all contrary to international law and official Canadian policy on Israeli colonies.
- **CIFTA fails to address product labelling issues**. CIFTA must be amended to explicitly prohibit the labelling of products made in the occupied Palestinian territories as "Israeli products," since Canada and the majority of the international community does not recognize Israeli sovereignty over the occupied Palestinian territories.

Through CIFTA, the Canadian government gives Israel preferential trade treatment without requiring any change in the state's illicit and repressive practices in the occupied Palestinian territories. It furthermore confers economic privileges onto Israel's settlement enterprises, while turning a blind eye to their human rights abuses. CIFTA does not in any way respect Canada's commitment to a peaceful and just settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Liberal Position

While renegotiating the modernized Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement, the Liberal Party bucked international law and ignored official Canadian foreign policy.

International Trade Minister Jim Carr's Bill C-85 included some promising aspects, including chapters on trade and gender, environmental protections and corporate responsibility, yet the Liberals failed to include any provision related to human rights. When the NDP questioned the government's failure to include a human rights provision – even proposing an amendment to change this status in committee – the Liberal government refused to change its position. Considering Israel's continued military occupation of Palestinian land and human rights abuses against Palestinians, the Liberal government's refusal to include a human rights provision is reprehensible.

In addition, in the draft of Bill C-85, the Liberal government refused to distinguish between the State of Israel and illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank. The Liberals on the Standing Committee on International Trade even voted against a motion to amend CIFTA to allow for this distinction. When questioned in the House of Commons, International Trade Minister Jim Carr tried to justify this conflation of Israel proper and illegal settlements by framing it as a benefit to the Palestinian people. On the contrary, the Liberal Party is simply choosing to reward these illegal settlements with preferential trade, while ignoring Palestinian human rights abuses. Only one Liberal Member of Parliament – MP Marwan Tabbara – voted against the flawed Bill C-85.

Conservative Position

The Conservative Party has remained a steadfast supporter of CIFTA. In fact, it was Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper who initially announced Canada would expand and modernize the existing CIFTA in 2015.²³⁰ As such, the Conservative position on CIFTA and Bill C-85 was indistinguishable from the Liberal government's position. At the start of 2019, Conservative Members of the Standing Committee on International Trade voted against a motion to amend CIFTA to distinguish between Israel proper and the Israeli colonies in the occupied Palestinian territories. All of the Conservative Members of Parliament voted in favour of passing CIFTA, despite its obvious shortcomings.

NDP Position

The NDP has been the most critical of Bill C-85 and the modernized CIFTA. The NDP frequently and publicly criticized the shortcomings of Bill C-85, both in the House of Commons and on social media. In fact, when Bill C-85 was first introduced to the House of Commons in May 2018, former NDP Foreign

Affairs Critic Hélène Laverdière immediately spoke out against the Bill, questioning Canada's inclusion of Israel's illegal settlements in the agreement.²³¹

After Bill C-85 was sent to the Standing Committee on International Trade, NDP MP Tracey Ramsey proposed a motion calling on the committee to "invite witnesses to appear to discuss the state of human rights in Israel and the occupied territories of Israel." This motion was voted down by both Conservative and Liberal committee members. Likewise, Ramsey moved to amend CIFTA to distinguish between the State of Israel and illegal Israeli settlements.²³²

Despite these setbacks, several NDP MPs – notably Alexandre Boulerice, Don Davies and Cheryl Hardcastle – continued to speak out against Bill C-85 in the House of Commons. Boulerice questioned why the Liberals rejected Tracey Ramsey's amendment, which would have required distinct labelling on products from illegal Israeli settlements so as to distinguish between companies in Israel and those "on the Palestinian territory that has been illegally occupied since 1967."²³³ Hardcastle pressed the government to include human rights provisions in CIFTA, "particularly relating to the rights of Palestinians in territories occupied by Israel."

Bloc Québécois Position

During the Bill C-85 debates, BQ MP Gabriel Ste-Marie spoke out against what he called Canada's "agreement with Israel and the occupied territories."²³⁴ He went on to argue that Canada's failure to distinguish between Israel and Israeli colonies in the occupied territories meant that Canada was indirectly conferring legitimacy on Israel's colonization of Palestinian land. Thus, while the BQ voted in support of CIFTA and trade with Israel, they still spoke out against CIFTA's trade with Israeli colonies, even citing UNSC Resolution 2334.²³⁵

Green Position

While the Green Party officially calls for changes to bring Canada's economic relationship with Israel in line with international law and conventions, it has not consistently applied this policy.

In December 2016, Green Party members voted for an updated Israel-Palestine policy which 1) calls for the renegotiation of CIFTA so that "it explicitly excludes products produced wholly or partly within or by illegal Israeli settlements, or by Israeli businesses operating within the OPT," and 2) calls for the strengthening of CIFTA compliance provisions to "ensure products labelled 'Made in Israel' are actually produced, entirely and exclusively, within Israel's internationally recognized borders."²³⁶

In July 2017, the Green Party issued a press release condemning the Canadian Food Inspection Agency for reversing its initial decision calling for goods produced in illegal Israeli settlements to be accurately labelled.²³⁷ Curiously, however, the Green Party was silent during the 2018-2019 renegotiation of CIFTA. Thus, while the Green Party has adopted a progressive policy position vis-à-vis CIFTA, it is not been applied consistently by Green Party leaders.

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