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November 1, 2024

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau and Minister Joly,

I am writing today to express my deep concern about the rapidly deteriorating situation in the Middle East and urge you to consider actions that exceed our current sanctions on Israel that are limited to individuals targeted under the Special Economic Measures (Extremist Settler Violence) Regulations.

In a world swirling with conflict, watching this war escalate over the past year has tugged at Canadians' hearts every day. The latest occurrences during nearly two weeks of devastating attacks in Northern Gaza, being the Knesset's decisions to ban UNWRA from operating in Israel and the designation of UNWRA as a terrorist organization. As the UN itself states, this action not only opposes the UN Charter, but it clearly violates the Israel's obligations under international law. I am glad that Canada, along with like-minded states, promptly expressed their shared concerns on this decision. Such concerns, however, must be followed by more concrete measures.

I have been in touch with many Yukoners who are urging our government to take all action we can to promote peace in the region and to aid those directly impacted by the conflict. Engaging with the U.S. and regional actors, as well as the \$100 million in humanitarian aid were appropriate initial steps, but the conflict has persisted far longer than anticipated, with a toll on civilians that has long passed any reasonable international measure. A range of additional supports is required, and Canada has an opportunity to play a more prominent leadership role.

We must look at every option that we can exert as a country to find a viable pathway to a resolution. While Canada's influence on this conflict may be limited, this does not mean we should refrain from action. I realize that it is important that Canada move in step with G7 allies, but Canada also has an opportunity to lead. Canada must ensure that it is not complicit in the ongoing violence.

In step with our government, I have long acknowledged Israel's right to defend itself. But such a right constrained by clear goals and unequivocal compliance with humanitarian law. The civilian toll in Gaza, and now in Lebanon, is horrific and unacceptable by any standard. The recent UNWRA decisions will only add to the horror, starvation, and violence. I am very concerned that the current Netanyahu government, despite continued pressure from the US government and allies, continues to act with brazen impunity.

I have signed onto the Arms Embargo Now letter, calling on our government to implement strong sanctions on Israel and to prevent any imports or exports of arms or parts of arms to or from Israel, regardless of permitting status. I understand that the motion adopted on March 18th, 2024, attempted

to address this issue. However, the effects of passing the motion have not been sufficient in preventing the export of arms or parts of arms to the Israeli armed forces. I urge you to impose these sanctions. Canada cannot be providing arms or parts of arms to an army that uses them against civilians.

As someone who has worked as a medical doctor in conflict zones, I am concerned not only with the loss of life by violence, but also the suffering through starvation and infectious diseases. Illnesses spread faster when people lose their homes, workplaces, and food sources. As the conflict expands to Lebanon and other areas, the need for food, medicine, clothing, and other necessities is increasingly urgent. I believe that Canada is in a strong position to provide this aid, and I urge you to work with Minister Hussein and other cabinet colleagues towards providing additional funding towards these efforts.

In an ideal world, we would not have to provide aid because the conflict would be over. This is not our reality. Canadians, whether they have ties to either side of the conflict or not, are disturbed and upset by the ongoing violence. We have a duty as a nation with a strong legacy of peacekeeping, to do everything we can and apply every tool available. The strengthening of sanctions on Israel while increasing humanitarian aid would help bring peace to the region and serve as a good first step.

It is important to stress however, that given the devastating situation in Sudan, where millions of people are displaced and subject to violence, famine, and disease, that increased aid to the Middle East does not dilute the already inadequate aid and attention to Sudan and other areas currently in dire need. As we continue to address the urgency of the Middle East crisis, I beg you that such action is not at the expense of Canada's attention to and advocacy for people in otherwise neglected areas of the world.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to your response.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Hanley', followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends to the right.

Sincerely,

Brendan Hanley
Member of Parliament for the Yukon