



May 24, 2018

The Hon Chrystia Freeland, P.C., M.P.
Minister for Foreign Affairs
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

RE: Canada's leadership in an immediate, independent, and transparent investigation into Gaza killings, including the shooting of Canadian doctor Tarek Loubani

Dear Minister Freeland,

I write to encourage the government regarding its commitment to an independent investigation into the recent violations of humanitarian law and international rights law on the Gaza strip.

In the House of Commons on May 22, you stated: "It is imperative that we establish the facts of what happened in Gaza, especially given the shooting of Canadian doctor Tarek Loubani. That is why Canada is calling for an independent investigation to ascertain how the actions of all parties concerned contributed to these events, including reported incitement by Hamas."

Like many Canadians, The United Church of Canada strongly supports this action, and urges Canada and its international partners to adhere to specific principles in carrying out the independent investigation:

- A commitment to transparency to ensure that the investigative process remains free of all political influence or interference, and that its findings and recommendations be made public. Carrying out this investigation requires principled political will, which should remain free of political interference that could bias the outcome.
- A commitment to fighting and ending impunity for grave international crimes. State and non-state actors alleged to have committed grave international crimes should not be given latitude to impede, block, or prevent an independent, transparent investigation.
- A commitment to accountability, should an independent and transparent investigation find that grave international crimes have been committed in Gaza.

Palestinians and Israelis need a reliable, honest broker to provide leadership in realizing a just and negotiated resolution urgently. Canada can play that role.



We continue pray for you as Canada seeks to play a global leadership role in promoting respect for human rights, dignity, and the building of a more peaceful world.

Sincerely,



The Right Rev. Jordan Cantwell
Moderator/Modératrice
The United Church of Canada/L'Église Unie du Canada

cc:

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