

Hon. Jack Layton, MP  
Leader of the National Democratic party  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

October 6, 2006

Dear Mr. Layton:

We, the undersigned organizations, wish to express our widely felt appreciation for the position taken by the New Democratic Party regarding Canada's foreign policy role in Afghanistan and the Middle East, including the forthright emergency resolutions adopted at the NDP conventions on September 10, 2006.

The recent major foreign policy shift by the Harper government, in lockstep with the current US foreign policy, is deeply troubling to many of us. There is a strong sense that the US-designed mission in Afghanistan in particular has put our troops in a no-win situation, without any tangible outcomes in sight in the foreseeable future. This conflict clearly calls for re-thinking and re-definition of our entire mission in that region, as you have rightly pointed out.

We similarly hope that the NDP will continue to be a voice for a just and durable peace in the Middle East. The conditions of the people in Gaza and elsewhere continue to grow more desperate by the day, almost unnoticed by the international community. This crisis calls for urgent efforts on part of our government and parliament to support a comprehensive and durable peace in that region, while addressing the desperate immediate humanitarian needs of the Palestinian people as pointed by various UN groups and representatives (see the CBC report attached).

While all of us can appreciate the need to maintain good relations and business interdependence with our powerful neighbour to the south, we must not compromise our long-term sovereignty in an effort to score some short-term points. The reflection of these principles in your outspoken stand is truly appreciated.

On behalf of the undersigned,

Tyseer Aboulnasr, O.ONT.

## **Muslim-Canadian organizations supporting this request**

(listed alphabetically)

Ahlul Bayt Centre (Ottawa)  
www.ahlul-bayt.org

representing Shi'a Muslims in Ottawa

Canadian Islamic Congress  
www.canadianislamiccongress.com

Coalition of Muslim Organizations (COMO) (Toronto) representing the organizations below  
www.comocanada.org

Al-Ansar Masjid  
Anatolia Islamic Centre  
Bin Abbas Mosque  
International Muslims Organizations(IMO)

IRFAN-Canada  
Islamic Forum of Canada  
Islamic Information & Dawah Centre  
Islamic Propagation Centre(Coopers)  
Khalid Bin Al-Walid Mosque(SISCA)  
Masjid-E Farooq-E Azam  
Masjid Rahamat  
Muslim Community Centre of Canada(MCCC)

Shiak Deedat Center  
Somali Relief Network of North America

UM Media/UM Financial Inc  
ANSARCO INC  
Fatih Mosque  
Islamic Foundation of Toronto  
Islamic Society of Toronto(DarulSalaam)

Muslim World League  
Taric Mosque  
World Assembly of Muslim Youth Canada(WAMY)

Jamat-E-Islahul Muslemin of Mississauga  
Imdadul Islamic Jamat of Toronto  
Bosnian Islamic Centre  
Jamia Islamia Canada  
Shalimar Community Services Inc.  
Shabab Islamic Centre  
Malton Islamic Centre

Dar Al Tawheed Islamic Centre

Edmonton Council of Muslim Communities  
[www.theecmc.com](http://www.theecmc.com)

representing Muslim organizations in Edmonton

Islamic Ahlul Bayt Assembly of Canada  
[www.islamabc.org](http://www.islamabc.org)

representing Sh'ia organizations across Canada

Islamic Circle of North America  
[www.icnacanada.org](http://www.icnacanada.org)

representing various mosques and organizations

Islamic Society of Kingston  
[www.kingstonmuslims.net](http://www.kingstonmuslims.net)

Islamic Society of North America (Canada)  
[www.isnacanada.com](http://www.isnacanada.com)

representing various mosques and organizations

Islamic Supreme Council of Canada  
[www.islamicsupremecouncil.com](http://www.islamicsupremecouncil.com)

Jamiatul Muslemin of Toronto  
[www.madinahmasjid.org](http://www.madinahmasjid.org)

Muslim Association of Canada  
[www.macnet.ca](http://www.macnet.ca)

representing several mosques and community centers across Canada

Muslim Community Council of Ottawa Gatineau (MCCOG)

representing over 25 community associations in Ottawa

Muslim Council of Calgary  
[www.muslimsofcalgary.com](http://www.muslimsofcalgary.com)

representing Muslim associations in Calgary

Muslim Council of Montreal  
[www.muslimcouncil.org](http://www.muslimcouncil.org)

representing several Muslim organizations in Montreal

Ottawa Muslim Association  
[www.omaonline.ca](http://www.omaonline.ca)

Salaheddin Islamic Centre  
[www.salaheddin.org](http://www.salaheddin.org)

The British Columbia Muslim Association  
[www.thebcma.com](http://www.thebcma.com)

representing mosques and Islamic centers across British Columbia

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SOURCE: <http://www.cbc.ca/world/story/2006/09/26/canada-palestinians.html>

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CANADA ADDING TO 'TRAGIC' CONDITIONS OF PALESTINIANS: UN OFFICIAL  
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Canada is partly to blame for allowing human rights for Palestinians to deteriorate to a new low, a UN rights expert says.

John Dugard said Palestinians are subjected to "tragic" conditions in Gaza and the West Bank.

He criticized Canada, Israel, the U.S. and western European countries for cutting off funding to the Palestinian Authority after Hamas' victory in legislative elections in January.

Those countries have said funding will remain cut off unless the militant group renounces violence and recognizes Israel.

"In effect, the Palestinian people have been subjected to economic sanctions — the first time an occupied people has been so treated," Dugard said. "Palestinian people are punished for having democratically elected a regime unacceptable to Israel, the U.S. and the EU."

Dugard said Israel was largely responsible for the "intolerable" situation for Palestinians, three-quarters of whom depend on food aid. He also blamed its military incursions and tough roadblocks for preventing hospitals from having enough electricity and for damaging or destroying numerous schools and houses.

"Gaza is a prison and Israel seems to have thrown away the key," Dugard said. "A serious humanitarian crisis prevails in the West Bank."

Dugard said the situation is worse now than at any other time during his mandate. He said Israel's reaction to the kidnapping of a soldier in June led to the deaths of more than 100 civilians and the wounding of many.

"What Israel chooses to describe as collateral damage to the civilian population is, in fact, indiscriminate killing prohibited by international law," he said.

But Itzhak Levanon, Israel's ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, said Dugard's allegations were "one-sided" and he described the situation as "over-simplified."

"This report is characterized by errors of omission as well as distortions of both fact and law," he said.

With files from the Associated Press

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