



January 26, 2024

The Right Hon. Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6  
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Dear Prime Minister,

Greetings to you from The United Church of Canada.

I write today to urge your office and all relevant ministries of the Canadian government to demonstrate its respect for the January 26, 2024 ruling of the International Court of Justice and do everything in its power to urge the State of Israel to uphold the provisional measures issued by the Court.

In so doing, the United Church notes that all parties to the conflict in Gaza must adhere to international humanitarian law. We convey its deep concern for hostages abducted during the attack in Israel on October 7, 2023 and held since then by Hamas and other armed groups, and call for their immediate and unconditional release.

As a state party and signatory to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, Canada has a legal and moral duty to prevent acts of genocide and avoid complicity in any such acts.

As the 109th day of suffering continues, Canada must take every step to facilitate the safety, wellbeing, and security of Palestinians and the safe return of the hostages. This includes demanding an immediate and permanent ceasefire; calling for the safe and sustained provision of all necessary humanitarian relief; and supporting every measure to safeguard all evidence of both the incitement to commit and execution of war crimes in Gaza, ensuring that all parties responsible are held to account.

Long before October 7, 2023, the United Church joined its voice to those of literally millions of others in Canada and around the world in calling for the application of international law regarding the devastating impacts of Israel's ongoing military occupation of Palestinian territories. We reiterated this call following the horrific assault on Israeli civilians by Hamas on October 7th, and repeatedly in the days and months since, as Palestinians in Gaza are trapped by Israel's military assault and siege.

All these actions constitute, at minimum, collective punishment and, at worst, appear as acts of genocide. They are violations of international law and those responsible must be held accountable.

Canada has spoken often and with conviction about its support for a “rules-based international order.” Your government must do no less now, and fully support the ICJ ruling. There is no military solution to this crisis. In its public support of the ICJ call, the United Church urges Canada to take an unequivocal stand that the suffering in Gaza must end, now.

We look forward to the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how The United Church of Canada and its partners can support Canada in living up to this responsibility.

Sincerely,



The Rev. Michael Blair  
General Secretary  
The United Church of Canada

CC:

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