

Government Misleading Canadians on Canada-Israel Arms Trade, Aid to Gaza

By [Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East](#)

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Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) is calling out the Canadian government for disseminating misleading information about Canada's arms trade and humanitarian aid. Over the past week, Ministers have made irresponsible comments which obfuscate Canada's role vis-à-vis the unfolding genocide in Gaza, including the false suggestion that Canada is not exporting weapons to Israel. First, CJPME notes that Canada continues to export military goods to Israel at record-high levels, despite comments otherwise from Minister Joly and others. Second, CJPME points out that Canada's suspension of funding to the UN agency for Palestine refugees (UNRWA) contradicts Ministers' statements expressing concern about the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

"Instead of explaining its poor arms trade policy decisions, this government is misleading Canadians into thinking that we aren't exporting weapons to Israel. And instead of concretely addressing an unfolding genocide, Canadian ministers are cutting aid and claiming that their hands are tied. This is disgraceful," said Thomas Woodley, President of CJPME. "Canada must end its obfuscating and take immediate action to end its complicity in Israel's genocide in Gaza," added Woodley.

CJPME rejects the false claim that Canada is not exporting weapons to Israel. International Development Minister Ahmed Hussen recently [claimed](#) "We haven't exported arms to Israel in 30 years," and Foreign Affairs Minister Mélanie Joly told a committee that "there [have] been no weapons sent under my watch," while suggesting that Canada is exporting only "non-lethal" military goods. These attempts to downplay Canada's exports are undermined by the reporting data, which shows that Canada has [approved](#) \$114M in military goods to Israel since 2015, and has [continued](#) to approve military exports since October 7. CJPME

points out that these ministers are defining “arms” and lethality in a very narrow and unconventional way — a way which ignores the role of weapons components and other military goods which continue to pose a human rights risk. CJPME has developed a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) resource which explores these issues in more detail. “As Canadians increasingly demand that their government impose an arms embargo on Israel, politicians are trying to pretend that the arms trade doesn’t exist,” said Woodley.

CJPME is also concerned by statements from Minister Joly and Minister Hussen which suggest that Canada is concerned about humanitarian access to Gaza, despite their political decision to defund UNRWA [without seeing any evidence](#) to back up Israel’s accusations. Despite Canada’s announcement of additional aid funding to other organizations, CJPME has [pointed out](#) that the redirection of funding away from UNRWA threatens the collapse of humanitarian infrastructure and may violate the provisional orders of the International Court of Justice. “Canada cannot claim to be a champion of humanitarian access to Gaza when its irresponsible actions threaten to break the backbone of the aid operation itself,” said Woodley.

Finally, CJPME is unconvinced by statements from Immigration Minister Marc Miller that he is frustrated by the lack of progress on bringing the loved ones of Canadians out of Gaza. Miller implies that Canada has no agency in terms of acting in support of relatives of Canadians trapped in Gaza, and this is false. If indeed Miller and his Ministry have no negotiating power with the nations involved, then the government either needs to change the leadership within the Ministry, or change its international policy. CJPME also notes that Canada’s visa aid program is one of the most restrictive of its kind, with an arbitrary cap of 1,000 people, and requiring unprecedented levels of personal information of people who are trying to flee a war zone. CJPME reiterates its [concerns](#) that these restrictions appear to be based on the idea that Palestinians are an inherent security threat. “Canada cannot impose its own barriers on the visa process, and then claim to have its hands tied by others,” added Woodley.

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