

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Ottawa, January 30, 2024**

### **Arms Exports to Israel Violate Canadian and International Law, Says Canadian and Palestinian Coalition to Federal Government**

On January 28, a coalition of Canadians and Palestinians wrote to Minister of Foreign Affairs Mélanie Joly demanding that the federal government immediately halt all exports and transfers of Canadian military goods and technology to Israel.

The coalition, which consists of Canadian Lawyers for International Human Rights (CLAIHR), Al-Haq - Law in the Service of Man, Ayman Oweida and a confidential Palestinian asylum seeker, argues that the *Export and Import Permits Act* prevents Canada from issuing permits to Canadian companies to export military goods and technology to Israel due to the substantial risk that they could be used to commit serious violations of international law and serious acts of violence against women and children.

The coalition outlines the extensive evidence that Israel has committed and continues to commit such violations and acts in its military operations in Gaza and in the West Bank, including the real and imminent risk that Israel is violating the *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide*.

The coalition has put the government on notice that, in these circumstances, issuing export permits for Canadian military goods and technology to Israel violates both Canadian and international law. The coalition has asked for a response from Canada confirming that it has stopped this illegal activity within fourteen days, failing which the coalition will consider its legal options.

“CLAIHR is seeking to hold the Canadian government to its legal obligations, both under international and domestic law, to ensure Canadian arms are not used to commit war crimes and crimes against humanity”, said Henry Off, member of Canadian Lawyers for International Human Rights. “We are calling on Foreign Affairs Minister Joly to comply with the law and halt all military export approvals to Israel.”

“The Israeli military is killing an average of 250 Palestinians per day in Gaza and has deliberately imposed a humanitarian crisis upon the 2.3 million Palestinian residents of Gaza, forcibly displacing 1.7 million people and bringing Gaza to the brink of famine – acts which are intended to destroy the Palestinian people in Gaza as a group” said Shawan Jabarin of Al-Haq - Law in the Service of Man. “Al-Haq is calling on Canada to honour its obligations under international law to stop the provision and transit of military equipment that may foreseeably be used in the commission of these international crimes.”

“As a Canadian, I am shocked that Canada is issuing permits to Canadian companies to export military goods that could be used to breach the fundamental human rights of my family in Gaza,” said Ayman Oweida.

“While Israel violates international law, Canada continues to profit by providing it with military goods and technology to commit those violations. In 2021, Canada exported over \$26-million worth of military goods to Israel but refuses to say whether this continues,” said the confidential asylum seeker.

**Key Excerpts – [Export and Import Permits Act \(R.S.C., 1985, c. E-19\)](#), sections 7.3-7.4**

**Mandatory considerations — export and brokering**

7.3 (1) In deciding whether to issue a permit under subsection 7(1) or 7.1(1) in respect of arms, ammunition, implements or munitions of war, the Minister shall take into consideration whether the goods or technology specified in the application for the permit

(a) would contribute to peace and security or undermine it; and

(b) could be used to commit or facilitate

(i) a serious violation of international humanitarian law,

(ii) a serious violation of international human rights law,

(iii) an act constituting an offence under international conventions or protocols relating to terrorism to which Canada is a party,

(iv) an act constituting an offence under international conventions or protocols relating to transnational organized crime to which Canada is a party, or

(v) serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women and children.

**Substantial risk**

7.4 The Minister shall not issue a permit under subsection 7(1) or 7.1(1) in respect of arms, ammunition, implements or munitions of war if, after considering available mitigating measures, he or she determines that there is a substantial risk that the export or the brokering of the goods or technology specified in the application for the permit would result in any of the negative consequences referred to in subsection 7.3(1).

**About the Letter Signatories**

**Canadian Lawyers for International Human Rights (CLAHR)**, founded in 1992, is a non-governmental organization of lawyers, law students, and legal academics working to promote international human rights within and in connection to Canada;

**Al-Haq - Law in the Services of Man** is an independent Palestinian non-governmental human rights organization established in 1979 in Ramallah, West Bank, to protect and promote human rights and the rule of the law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory;

**Ayman Oweida** is a Palestinian-Canadian currently residing in Québec with family in Gaza, some of whom have been killed in suspected international crimes;

**The confidential applicant** is a Palestinian woman from Gaza who is currently seeking asylum in Canada.

**Attachment: 28 January 2024 Letter to the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs from Canadian Lawyers for International Human Rights, Al-Haq - Law in the Service of Man, Ayman Oweida and a confidential applicant**

**For more information and media availabilities for each of the signatories, please contact:**

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