

CJPME Condemns Israel's Expulsion of Canadian UN Aid Official

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

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Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) condemns Israel's decision not to renew the visa of a top United Nations humanitarian aid official, who is also a Canadian national. Israel has notified the UN that it will not renew the visa for Lynn Hastings, resident humanitarian coordinator for the occupied Palestinian territories, when her visa expires later this month. CJPME urges the Canadian government to demand that Israel renew Hastings' visa, and take action to hold Israel accountable for its attacks on humanitarian workers.

"It is outrageous that Israel is expelling a UN humanitarian official at the same time as it is creating a humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza through bombardment and siege," states Michael Bueckert, Vice President of CJPME. "This is a vindictive action against the UN itself, and only adds to the chaos and catastrophe inflicted by Israel's lethal and unparalleled attacks on humanitarian workers," continued Bueckert."

CJPME warns that the expulsion of a top humanitarian official undermines the UN's efforts to respond to the grave humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza, which is already significantly restrained by Israeli actions. Israel's strategy of 'total siege' has cut off access to water, food, electricity, medicine, and fuel, bringing the hospital system to collapse and deliberately harming the basic conditions of health of the civilian population. Former ICC prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo has [said](#) that Israel's siege is itself "a form of genocide" under the Genocide Convention because – backed by the genocidal statements of Israeli leaders – it is inflicting conditions designed to destroy an entire group.

Israel's expelling of a UN official is part of a series of malicious actions taken against UN humanitarian efforts in Gaza. Israel has repeatedly bombed facilities run by UNRWA, the UN agency for Palestine refugees, killing over 100 UNRWA staff, while [claiming](#) at the UN Security Council that many UN staff are members of Hamas and therefore constitute legitimate military targets. The UN Secretary-General has [said](#) that this represents the

“highest number of aid workers killed in UN history in such a short time.”

“Israel’s open contempt for the UN should prompt Canada to harshly censure Israel at the UN. It is a moral failing of Canada to continue to protect Israel from criticism at the UN as Israel is bombing UN facilities, killing UN staff in large numbers, and expelling their top officials,” said Bueckert.

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