

The “New Anti-Semitism”

Conference in Ottawa

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

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Canada’s Governor General, others lend names to conference alleging “new anti-Semitism”

For Immediate Release

Montreal, November 5, 2010 – The Inter-parliamentary Coalition for Combatting Anti-Semitism (ICCA) will be holding its second international conference Nov. 7-9 in Ottawa at the Parliament Buildings. Currently posted documents at the ICCA website reveal that Canada’s Governor General David Johnston, the House and Senate Speakers, Official Opposition Leader Michael Ignatieff and Foreign Affairs critic Bob Rae will speak at the conference.

ICCA’s Ottawa conference is a follow-up to its February 2009 inaugural conference in London England at which it issued a declaration warning of a “dramatic increase in recorded anti-Semitic hate crimes,” but provided no evidence to substantiate that claim. The London declaration also implied that the intensifying criticism of Israel – abundant during and after Israel’s lethal 22-day assault on Gaza just prior to the London conference – was itself a new form of anti-Semitism.

Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) is disappointed that the Governor General and Messrs Ignatieff and Rae are lending their names – and Canada’s – to a closed event orchestrated to shield Israel from criticism. CJPME notes that criticism rightly falls on nations – like Israel – which repeatedly violate international law and basic human rights. CJPME President Thomas Woodley notes, “The presence on ICCA’s steering committee of hardliner Israeli minister Yuli Edelstein -who not only opposes any moves to scale back the Occupation but also seeks to intensify Israeli presence in Palestinian territory – is indicative of ICCA’s orientation and underlying purpose.” CJPME is firmly opposed to anti-Semitism, a historical problem of tragic proportions, and is concerned about a growing movement to conflate criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism.

Israel has recently come under criticism for various policies – chief among them the colonization (a.k.a. “settlement”) of the occupied Palestinian territories by Jewish Israelis. This policy violates the Fourth Geneva Convention and has derailed current peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. Despite international condemnation, Israel also continues to impose an illegal blockade on Gaza and its people.

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