

UN General Assembly endorses Goldstone report

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Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#), [United Nations](#)

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Montreal — On Thursday, November 5th, Member States at the United Nations adopted a resolution supporting the main recommendations of the [Goldstone report](#). The report, which had already been approved by the UN Human Rights Council last October, raises accusations of war crimes committed in Gaza during the Israeli assault last winter. After two full days of deliberations, the vote of the General Assembly ended with 114 votes for, 18 against and 44 abstentions. The United States and Canada voted against the resolution, as well as seven out of twenty-seven European states, while Russia, France and Great Britain abstained. Most developing countries as well as the Non-Aligned Movement voted in favour of the resolution.

The resolution calls for Israel and the Palestinians to undertake within three months “credible and independent” investigations of alleged war crimes committed during the conflict in Gaza. It also requests UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon, to send the case to the Security Council, the latter being entitled to refer the matter to the International Criminal Court (ICC) if the concerned parties are unable or unwilling to implement investigations in accordance with international standards. The resolution also requested for the UN Secretary-General to come back before the Assembly within three months to report on the implementation of its recommendations “with a view of considering further actions” within the UN.

CJPME believes that this overwhelming vote in favour of the recommendations of the Goldstone report is crucial: it clearly expresses the will of the international community to ensure that perpetrators of war crimes and other violations of international humanitarian law cannot escape accountability for their actions. “The seriousness of the crimes perpetrated in Gaza last winter requires that Canada – like other states – meet its commitments under international law by giving its full support to the resolution passed by the General Assembly,” said the President of CJPME, Tom Woodley. “We encourage the Canadian government to capitalize on the momentum surrounding the decision of the General Assembly to continue the fight against impunity and demand justice and reparation for the victims of this conflict.”

The [Goldstone report](#) – an extensive document of 475 pages – outlines the findings of the fact-finding mission established by the UN Human Rights Council. The report accuses the Israeli army “of acts amounting to war crimes and also possibly, in certain circumstances, crimes against humanity.” It also blames Palestinian militants for war crimes because of rocket attacks launched on Israeli civilian areas, but nevertheless devotes 90 percent of its content to the Israeli war crimes, which were much more extensive and devastating in nature.

For more information, please contact:

Grace Batchoun
Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East
Telephone: (514) 745-8491
[CJPME Email](#) - [CJPME Website](#)

Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) is a non-profit and secular organization bringing together men and women of all backgrounds who labour to see justice and peace take root again in the Middle East. Its mission is to empower decision-makers to view all sides with fairness and to promote the equitable and sustainable development of the region.

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