

May 1, 2020

Dear Minister Champagne,

We write to you to urge the Canadian government to continue its commitment to a two-state solution in Israel-Palestine and therefore to oppose unilateral Israeli annexation of any part of the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

With a history of nearly 35 years and over 1,000 active donors, the New Israel Fund of Canada (NIFC) is the largest progressive Jewish organization in Canada devoted to Israel. Our mission is to support a just and democratic Israel that upholds equality for all its citizens, as envisioned in its Declaration of Independence, and that upholds fundamental human rights for all those under its authority.

We have watched with increasing alarm over recent weeks as negotiations for a new Israeli government concluded with a coalition agreement that includes plans to annex all or part of the occupied territories as early as July 1. We believe it is important for Israel's allies around the world to send a strong message against annexation and other threats to Israel's democracy. Any unilateral annexation in the occupied territories would gravely damage Israel's democracy. It would be a slap in the face to Canadian-Israeli shared values of human rights and a devastating blow for all of those who seek justice and democracy for Israelis and Palestinians. Annexation would make the unequal and discriminatory legal system in the West Bank formal and permanent. Even annexation of only a portion of the West Bank could lead to the end of the two-state solution and greatly increase the chances of continued sectarian violence.

In Canada, we know that our views are shared by large segments of Canadian Jewry. According to the findings of a recent major study, 25% of Canadian Jews believe Israel's settlements are illegal under international law and 39% of Canadian Jews believe those settlements are detrimental to Israel's security.

We urge the Canadian government to oppose any attempts towards unilateral annexation.

We welcome the opportunity for further dialogue on these issues with you at any time.

Sincerely,



Ben Murane
Executive Director



Amy Block
President