



**Mennonite
Central
Committee
Canada**

April 16, 2007

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper
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Government of Canada
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The Honourable Peter Mackay
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Government of Canada
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Dear Sirs;

We are writing to urge you to indicate Canada's support for the recent so-called "Arab initiative" for peace in relation to the Palestinian/Israeli conflict.

We make this appeal because of our longstanding involvement in the region. We started working with the Palestinian people in 1949. Since then we have developed programs in six other countries in the region. We also have substantial relations with some Israeli groups. This involvement has given us a first-hand awareness, not only of the violence and injustice that so many people in the region have suffered, but also of their deep hope for peace.

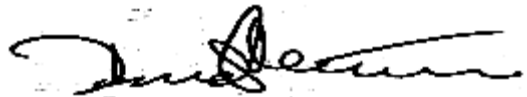
Because of this we are pleased not only for this initiative but also because the interest that it has found in the Israeli Prime Minister, in a significant portion of the Israeli people, and in the international community. Committed to peace and security for both Israelis and Palestinians, this initiative appears close to the position that Canada has held for nearly four decades, namely, that Israel should withdraw from the territories it gained in the 1967 war, that the other states and parties in the region should recognize Israel and respect its borders, and that there should be a just resolution of the refugee issue.

We are under no illusion that it would be easy to implement these visions. There would have to be extensive negotiations and considerable flexibility. But Canada can make a substantial contribution, in part because of its extensive involvement in the peace process that followed the 1993 Oslo Accords. An indication, now, of Canadian support for this initiative could help to move it forward.

We believe that the violence of the last half dozen years and the poverty and hopelessness that has

resulted, make it imperative that this initiative be supported. Not to do so would be to fail on our most basic human obligations to the people of the region, be they Jewish, Muslim or Christian.

Sincerely yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Peters". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the beginning and a long, sweeping tail.

Don Peters
Executive Director
Mennonite Central Committee Canada

cc. The Hon. Stephane Dion
The Hon. Gilles Duceppe
The Hon. Jack Layton
Members of the HC Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs & International Development