
CANADA PROVIDES SUPPORT TO THE NEW PALESTINIAN GOVERNMENT

The Honourable Peter MacKay, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, and the Honourable Josée Verner, Minister of International Cooperation and Minister for La Francophonie and Official Languages, today announced support to the new Palestinian government.

"The Government of Canada welcomes the leadership of President Abbas and Prime Minister Fayyad in establishing a government that Canada and the rest of the international community can work with," said Minister MacKay. "In light of the new Palestinian government's commitment to non-violence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, and in recognition of the opportunity for a renewal of peace efforts, Canada will provide assistance to the new Palestinian government. We recognize the fundamental challenges facing President Abbas and Prime Minister Fayyad in such areas as governance and the rule of law, and hope that Canada's support will contribute to much-needed reforms."

Canada will make an immediate contribution of \$8 million, through the Canadian International Development Agency, in direct support to the new government, by way of the Quartet-approved Temporary International Mechanism. Canadian assistance will focus on the priorities identified by Prime Minister Fayyad, including security and democratic, social and economic development. Canada will work closely with Prime Minister Fayyad, his government, Quartet members, and our regional and international partners to ensure that our contribution has both an immediate and sustained impact.

"Canada is also very concerned about the humanitarian situation of the Palestinians, especially in Gaza," said Minister Verner. "Canada will maintain its long-standing commitment to addressing the humanitarian needs of the Palestinian people, through a \$1 million contribution to the International Committee of the Red Cross, whose activities will focus on the protection of civilians and non-food assistance to those most in need." In the last fiscal year, Canada provided more than \$30 million in humanitarian assistance to Palestinians, including refugees.

Canada will also continue to provide assistance in areas where it can be most effective, such as helping to reduce poverty, promoting democracy, supporting reform of the security sector, and contributing to the U.S. Security Coordinator's mission. Canada is also exploring opportunities for partnership with the EU in police training and capacity building.

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