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## **Joint statement by Minister Mackay and Minister Verner on new Palestinian Government and assistance to the Palestinian people**

No. 30

Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay and International Cooperation Minister Josée Verner today made the following announcement regarding Hamas forming the next government of the Palestinian Authority and Canada's assistance to the Palestinians.

"The Palestinian Legislative Council has approved the formation of a Hamas-led government," stated Minister MacKay. "The stated platform of this government has not addressed the concerns raised by Canada and others concerning non-violence, the recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Roadmap for Peace. As a result, Canada will have no contact with the members of the Hamas cabinet and is suspending assistance to the Palestinian Authority," added the Minister. "A clear commitment by the Hamas government to the principles that we and the international community have outlined remains an essential precondition for Canada to resume any assistance to the Palestinian Authority."

"At the same time, Canada remains committed to the ultimate goal of a negotiated, two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict," said Minister Verner. "Canada also makes an important distinction between assistance to the Palestinian Authority and to Palestinians. Working with our partners and through the United Nations, its agencies and other organizations, Canada will continue to support and respond to the humanitarian needs of the Palestinian people. Canada will also continue to work with the voices of moderation within Palestinian society."

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