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Hon. Chrystia Freeland
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Global Affairs Canada

June 28, 2017

Dear Minister Freeland,

I am writing to you to express concerns about your government's lack of clarity with regard to the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Many Canadians have written to me to express their dismay at Canada's inaction on crucial human rights issues in the region, including Canada's silence during the recent widespread hunger strike by Palestinian prisoners, and Canada's relative silence on the issue of illegal Israeli settlements.

As I expressed in my letter to you on May 30, 2017, the illegality of Israeli settlements under international law has long been recognized by the vast majority of states and was recently reaffirmed by UN Security Council Resolution 2334.

I have asked you on multiple occasions, both in the House of Commons and in my previous letter, whether your government plans to abide by this resolution. I have yet to receive a response that goes beyond generalities. I wish to draw your attention to a recent public statement by Amnesty International (MDE 15/6296/2017) calling on states to go beyond condemning illegal Israeli settlements, and to take action and uphold their obligations under international law, as UNSCR 2334 requires us to do.

I ask you today, if Canada will abide by UNSCR 2334, to list the actions Canada will take to uphold this resolution.

Further, I once again urge you to directly raise concerns about settlements, forced displacement and demolitions with your Israeli counterpart at the earliest opportunity. It is important that Canada

clearly convey that these activities are not only illegal, but also greatly hinder the possibility of a two-state solution to the conflict.

Canada must now prioritize support for international efforts to bring the two sides back to the negotiating table, the only hope for securing a lasting and just peace in the region, where both Israelis and Palestinians can live in peace and security.

I look forward to your response at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "H Laverdière".

Hélène Laverdière, MP for Laurier – Sainte-Marie
NDP Foreign Affairs Critic