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CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CANADA

## Ottawa

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## Hélène Laverdière

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### Hon. Stéphane Dion

Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Global Affairs Canada

*September 22, 2016*

### Re: URGENT – Women's Boat to Gaza

Dear Minister Dion,

I write to you today concerning the Women's Boat to Gaza. As you know, several Canadians are on board a ship on its way to Gaza in order to challenge the blockade.

I am sure that you will agree with us that people's right to peaceful protest must be respected, especially in difficult situations of conflict, and that the safety of all parties involved must be a priority. While it is not our party policy to support flotillas, we reiterate our concern for those involved and continue to urge restraint in response to protest flotillas.

I also note that the government of Canada has a clear responsibility to provide consular assistance to Canadians detained abroad. In the event the Women's Boat to Gaza is intercepted, I ask you to let us know what steps your government will take to provide consular services to Canadians on the boat.

More broadly, I remind you that the NDP has consistently called for an end to the blockade of Gaza to alleviate the human suffering caused by the conflict. On repeated occasions we have asked your government to increase assistance for the reconstruction of Gaza. I also hope to see a contribution by Canada to UNRWA within the coming weeks.

We also recognize Israel's legitimate security concerns with respect to the smuggling of weapons into Gaza and have called for effective international arrangements to address these concerns.

The NDP's position is in keeping with UN Security Council resolution 1860, which called for "unimpeded provision through Gaza of food, fuel and medical treatment, and intensified international arrangements to prevent arms and ammunition smuggling."

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

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

**Hélène Laverdière**  
NDP Critic for Foreign Affairs