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HOUSE OF COMMONS  
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Hon. Stéphane Dion  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Global Affairs Canada

May 26, 2016

Dear Minister Dion,

I write to you today with regard to two subjects that have come to my attention through meetings with the Palestinian General Delegation in Canada.

As you know, the Palestinian General Delegation opened its offices in Ottawa in 1995. The Delegation represents the Palestinian government and people in Canada, and provides an important connection to the region through cultural and economic outreach.

However, the Delegation has no official relationship with the Government of Canada and is not recognized as a full diplomatic mission. This presents a number of challenges in terms of providing services to the Palestinian-Canadian community. As a consequence, I would urge you to look favourably on the Palestinian General Delegation's request for upgraded status in order to address this gap.

I would also like the opportunity to discuss the potential for Canada to develop new funding for peacebuilding and development projects in the Occupied Territories that would build on Canada's current focus on judicial and security sector reform. As I am sure you will agree, Canada has much to contribute as a development partner in the areas of peacebuilding, women's rights, culture, health and sports.

I look forward to an opportunity to discuss these issues with you at your convenience.

Yours sincerely,

**Hélène Laverdière**  
NDP Foreign Affairs Critic