

**TO:** MAYOR & COUNCILLORS

**FROM:** COUNCILLOR GU

**SUBJECT: ADVOCATING FOR CANADA'S ROLE: PEACE FOR THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE**

**PURPOSE:** To seek Council authorization to advocate to the federal government to establish a full two-way arms embargo with Israel and transform the Gaza temporary resident visa (TRV) program to support the safe reunification of Gazan-Canadian families, and for the City of Burnaby to sign the Apartheid-Free Communities Pledge.

## RECOMMENDATION

**THAT** the Mayor write a letter to the federal government advocating for the establishment of a full two-way arms embargo to end both the export and import of all military goods between Canada and Israel, and for the transformation of the Gaza temporary resident visa (TRV) program to safely and effectively reunify Gazan-Canadian families; and,

**THAT** the City of Burnaby be a signatory of the Apartheid-Free Communities Pledge<sup>1</sup>.

## BACKGROUND

Over the course of 22 months, Israel has attacked every hospital in Gaza<sup>2</sup>; Israel has killed over 62,000 Palestinians, at least 18,885 of whom were children<sup>3</sup>; Israel has killed more journalists than the U.S. Civil War, World Wars I and II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the wars in Yugoslavia in the 1990s and 2000s, and the post-9/11 war in Afghanistan, combined<sup>4</sup>; Israel has killed 408 aid workers since October 7, 2023<sup>5</sup>; and Israel has blocked medical supplies, food, baby formula, and life-saving aid from

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<sup>1</sup> <https://apartheid-free.org/andpledge>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/4/and13/timeline-israels-attacks-on-hospitals-throughout-its-war-on-gaz>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/8/and19/israel-has-killed-nearly-19000-children-in-gaza-war-as-strikes-intensify>

<sup>4</sup> <https://foreignpolicy.com/2025/04/and01/gaza-war-worst-ever-for-reporters-costs-of-war-project>

<sup>5</sup> <https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/and04/116173>

entering Gaza since March 2, 2025<sup>6</sup>. All the above actions, including the indiscriminate killing of civilians, are international war crimes.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACTS**

None.

## **DISCUSSION**

There are thousands of concerned Burnaby residents who are horrified as they watch these crimes against humanity unfold in real-time. Burnaby City Council can and must urge the federal government to take real action by ending Canada's role in exporting and importing military goods to Israel that are plausibly contributing to the ongoing atrocities against the Palestinian people; and to urge the federal government to redesign the TRV program for Gazan-Canadian families and safely evacuate family members, similar to the urgency and efficacy of the Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel Program, which saw over 900,000 applications approved and over 300,000 Ukrainians arriving in Canada.

Burnaby City Council can also join other cities in the US who have already signed the Apartheid-Free Communities Pledge. The pledge affirms Burnaby City Council's commitment to freedom, justice, and equality for the Palestinian people and all people, opposes all forms of racism, bigotry, discrimination, and oppression; declares ourselves an Apartheid-free community, and pledges to join others in working to end all support to Israel's Apartheid regime, settler colonialism, and military occupation.

Respectfully submitted,

COUNCILLOR GU

### **NOTE FROM LEGISLATIVE SERVICES:**

Links have been deactivated

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/newsand/articles/cj6ynz22871>