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## **CJPME greatly disheartened by Canada's Amnesty International Citation**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

MONTREAL, June 10, 2008 / – Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) is greatly disheartened by the human rights citation given to Canada by Amnesty International. On May 28, 2008 Canadian media reported that Canada had been singled out among Western nations for recent lapses in issues concerning fair trial, freedom of expression, fighting torture and social inequality. As one of its core policy pillars, CJPME affirms the importance of international law and human rights.

“As Canadians it is difficult for us to reconcile this citation with our values” CJPME’s Asma Ishak said Sunday. “We live in a democracy that has been a beacon for the world, and to see this light dim is deeply troubling and worthy of serious attention – including a change in our policies to remedy this situation”.

Amnesty also called attention to what it termed the world’s most dire “human rights flash points” which include Gaza, Myanmar, Darfur, Iraq and Zimbabwe. CJPME has issued several factsheets and recommendations since the beginning of the year calling for greater Canadian intervention in Gaza.

Canada was also cited by Amnesty International for failure to address the needs and rights of its First Nations peoples, its failure to implement recommendations from the Maher Arar inquiry, and the Canadian government’s failure to ensure its anti-terrorism legislation respects human rights concerns.

CJPME has—and continues to— promote human rights and international law by honing in on gross violations such as the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. With this bleak reminder, CJPME hopes that steps will be taken to better Canada’s standing on these defining issues.

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### **About CJPME**

*CJPME is a pan-Canadian grassroots advocacy organization uniting Canadians of all backgrounds who believe in justice, peace and security for all people in the Middle East. CJPME seeks to positively influence Canadian foreign policy in the Middle East and Canadian media coverage of the events and peoples of the region. CJPME values Canada’s historical role as a neutral broker in the Middle East, and wants to promote better understanding among Canadians of Middle Eastern issues and dynamics.*

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