

Contact: Grace Batchoun  
Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East  
Telephone: (514) 745-8491

## **CJPME APPLAUDS PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER'S MIDDLE EAST PEACE INITIATIVE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

MONTREAL, May 6, 2008 / – Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) would like to praise former President Carter's recent visit to the Middle East including Syria where he met exiled Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal. Although decried by some, Carter's visit provided a much-needed boost to dialog in the Middle East; a process that has been stagnated by Israeli, American and Canadian refusal to negotiate with the democratically-elected Hamas.

CJPME stands with Carter as he addressed the Israel Council of Foreign Relations, saying, "The problem is that Israel and the United States refuse to meet with someone who must be involved."

CJPME feels the Carter talks contribute greatly to the negotiations process as Hamas once again reiterated its willingness to negotiate based on a framework of the 1967 borders. Speaking to the BBC's Newsnight, Carter emphasized one of the important outcomes of his visit: "Hamas indicated... that if Israel is willing to have a mutual ceasefire and a renunciation of violence in Gaza and in the West Bank, they will accept it, and as a first step they would even accept just limiting that to Gaza."

Carter's visit comes at a crucial time as the UN has just announced that it will be forced to suspend food aid to over 1 million in Gaza due to the Israeli siege of the territory. "In such dire times, CJPME greatly appreciates President Carter's leadership, courage and support for peace," says CJPME's Thomas Woodley. "We hope more – especially more Canadian leaders – will follow his exceptional example."

####

### **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.*

For more information, please contact:  
Contact: Grace Batchoun  
Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East  
Telephone: (514) 745-8491  
[www.cjpme.ca](http://www.cjpme.ca)