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## **CJPME CALLS ON CANADA TO STRONGLY CONDEMN ISRAEL'S CONTINUED ILLEGAL COLONIZATION AND EXPANSION IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

MONTREAL, May 1 / – CJPME strongly condemns Israel's undermining of the peace process by its continued construction of illegal colonies (a.k.a. settlements.)

Israel has approved the construction of almost 1,700 homes in Occupied Palestinian Territory since renewing peace talks with the Palestinians at the Annapolis Summit in November 2007. CJPME points out that the illegal colonies have been one of the main obstacles to peace in the region as Israel continues to appropriate land in defiance of international law. U.S. Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice criticized the American ally remarking in Amman, Jordan on March 31, 2008 that "settlement activity should stop - expansion should stop."

"Any settlement expansion is contrary to Israel's obligations under the Road Map and to international law," UN Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki-Moon said through a statement released by his spokesperson on March 10, 2008. CJPME's Thomas Woodley seconded Mr. Ban agreeing that "international law must be respected." Woodley also remarked, "Israel has greatly undermined the chances for peace by continuing to build illegal colonies on lands illegally held. U.S. Secretary Rice is correct in saying that they absolutely must be halted if there is any hope of a just and lasting peace."

CJPME believes that Canada must condemn Israel's illegal activities, and must link Canada's continued cooperation with Israel to Israel's sustained compliance with international law, especially as it pertains to the illegal Israeli colonization of Palestinian territory. CJPME affirms the importance of international law and calls on the Canadian government to do so as well.

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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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