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REPORT ON THE EXPANSION OF ILLEGAL ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS

In the past 50 years, the State of Israel has built over 270 illegal settlements across the West Bank, and East Jerusalem, collectively known as the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), along with the Gaza Strip.

These illegal settlements draw near universal criticism, including from Canada, as a massive impediment against the creation of a Palestinian state. Canada recognizes these settlements as illegal. These settlements also produce goods that are shipped across the world, including into Canada.

Due to the fact that these structures in the West Bank and East Jerusalem are illegal under both international and Canadian law, and given that Canada has condemned the further recent extensions of these settlements, it is time for Canada to ban all imports produced within illegal Israeli settlements.

Illegal Settlements in East Jerusalem and the West Bank Break Both International and Canadian Law

The 1957 Geneva Conventions Act commits Canada to full observance of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, a set of agreements that form the core of international humanitarian law.

Article 49(6) of the Fourth Geneva Convention states that an occupying power cannot transfer any of its civilian population into the occupied territory.

Several UN resolutions have affirmed this principle over the years, most recently Resolution 2334 (December 2016), which states that Israeli settlements are "a flagrant violation under international law and a major obstacle to the achievement of a two-state solution and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace."

The two-state solution has also long been Canada's official position: an Israeli state next to a Palestinian state constituting the Occupied Territories. Canada has thus repeatedly criticized settlement expansion, including as recently as February 10th, 2026, calling them an affront to international law.

Moreover, Canada's Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Act, passed in 2000, also states that the transfer of civilian settlements in occupied areas constitute a war crime.

According to the UN Human Rights Council, over 700,000 settlers live illegally in 279 Israeli settlements (including over 140 "outposts," which are illegal even under Israeli law) across the occupied West Bank, including in East Jerusalem.

Israeli Settlement Imports to International Markets and Canada

The thriving economy currently sustaining illegal Israeli settlements produces a large volume of exports.

According to one United Nations report, agricultural products "are one of the main exports." For example, it states that "more than 80% of dates and approximately 70% of grapes produced by the illegal Jordan Valley settlements are directed for export."

Canada does not report how much business it does with these settlement entities. Nonetheless, we know that several wines made in West Bank settlements have ended up on Canadian shelves. A federal court ruled in 2022 that two of these wines misled consumers by including a "Product of Israel" label when they were actually made in illegal West Bank settlements.

The former UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory Michael Lynk estimated that total exports from illegal settlements to overseas markets amount to hundreds of millions of dollars (US).

Another report also cites a 2012 communique from the Israeli government to the World Bank that prices the volume of goods imported from illegal settlement goods into the European Union within a year at around €230 million.

Time to Ban Illegal Settlement Goods from Canada

Canada has the legal mechanisms to ban illegal settlement goods from our stores and shelves.

These mechanisms, like the *Special Economic Measures Act,* have already been used by Canada to restrict imports from several countries, such as Russian and Myanmar, due to human rights concerns.

We recommend the following:

1) Canada provides a full list of existing products imported from illegal Israeli settlement businesses, manufacturers, and all other relevant entities;

2) Canada implements a legal regime to ban all future imports made by illegal Israeli settlement entities.