



27 December, 2017

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G2

600 Shaftesbury Blvd
Winnipeg MB R3P 0M4
Toll free 1-866-888-6785
P: 204-888-6781
F: 204-831-5675
E: office@mennonitechurch.ca
W: www.mennonitechurch.ca

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

On behalf of Mennonite Church Canada, I wish to voice appreciation for your government's recent confirmation that the Canadian Embassy in Israel will remain in Tel Aviv. As an organization committed to peace and to respect for international law, Mennonite Church Canada is deeply concerned that the United States' official recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel profoundly threatens the prospects for a just and sustainable peace in the region.

Mennonites have worked in the region for 70 years, partnering with Palestinian and Israeli organizations that embrace nonviolent approaches to working for a just peace. We recognize that both peoples—Palestinians and Israeli Jews—yearn to live in a climate of peace and security without fear of violence. Both regard Jerusalem as their longed-for capital. We advocate for a shared Jerusalem in which the spiritual and historical significance of the city for Christians, Muslims, and Jews is honoured and all can practice their faiths freely.

The unilateral U.S. action to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital pre-empts and jeopardizes a genuine negotiated resolution to this critical issue. It effectively endorses Israel's annexation of East Jerusalem, which Global Affairs affirms is occupied territory under international law. The U.S. action goes against the international community's longstanding consensus that the status of Jerusalem is yet to be settled. Moreover, it has significantly increased tensions in the region, stoked conflict and hostility, and undermined peoples' hopes for a lasting peace.

As Canada's long-held policy articulates, the permanent status of Jerusalem can only be resolved through a negotiated agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. Mennonite Church Canada welcomes the Canadian government's public reaffirmation of this official position related to Jerusalem's special status. At the same time, we believe that the Government of Canada can and must play a more proactive role in supporting a comprehensive peace agreement, and in speaking boldly and with clarity regarding actions that are counterproductive to this aim.

Mennonite Church Canada urges your government to support diplomatic efforts—including United Nations resolutions—that seek to uphold international law and protect the rights, well-being, and dignity of the region's peoples. To that end, we assure you and your colleagues of our prayers.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Willard Metzger", is written over a horizontal line.

Willard Metzger, Executive Director
Mennonite Church Canada

CC: Hon. Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Foreign Affairs
Matt DeCoursey, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs
Hon. Erin O'Toole, Foreign Affairs Critic, Conservative Party
Hélène Laverdière, Opposition Critic for Foreign Affairs, New Democratic Party
Hon. Andrew Scheer, Leader, Official Opposition, Conservative Party
Elizabeth May, Leader, Green Party