



**The United Church  
of Canada  
General Council**

# **GC45 PM03 Arms Embargo Now Signatory for Summer 2025**

True Document Date: August 8, 2025

**Origin: Kendra Mitchell-Foster, co-sponsored by Rev. Keith Simmonds and Kendra Mitchell-Foster**

## **1. What is the issue? Why is it important?**

Calls from our membership and civil society to end Canadian arms deals with Israel, as well as relationships that allow for the demonstration and marketing of weaponry and military technology, are increasingly urgent given the current and abhorrent violence in Gaza, Palestine and Israel. United Nations human rights experts warn that sending Israel weapons, ammunition or components that it would use in Gaza likely violates international humanitarian law, and the United Nations Human Rights Council has called on all states to immediately “cease the sale, transfer and diversion of arms, munitions and other military equipment to Israel.” Canada’s own laws, based on the Arms Trade Treaty, require that it stop permitting the export of military technology when there’s a substantial risk those exports could be used to commit or facilitate serious violations of international humanitarian or human rights law, or commit serious acts of violence against women and children. We believe the Holy Spirit is calling us to respond to these calls and to the cries for peace in the Holy Land by i) becoming a signatory to the Arms Embargo Now call to the Canadian Government, and ii) issuing letters to provincial and federal representatives urging them to demand an immediate two-way arms embargo with Israel.

## **2. What is happening now?**

Currently, on the United Church of Canada's Support Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel page, there is a clear call from our denomination to the Canadian Government to "implement a comprehensive and binding arms embargo" <https://united-church.ca/social-action/act-now/support-justice-and-peacepalestine-and-israel#advocate>

In order to support this call, an in line with the principles-based approach to justice work, we need to take practical steps toward living into the arms embargo call from UCC. Small, practical steps that amplify this call are important and in line with: Costly and Prophetic Solidarity - Speak and act prophetically against injustice in all forms, knowing that the Holy Spirit calls us to costly solidarity with the least of these, in living our discipleship in the world. Full Participation and Decolonization - Listen attentively to social movements and groups of people who are historically marginalized and who are most affected by injustice. Engage in critical discernment about the best ways forward when called upon to speak and act for justice, to dismantle institutions and practices that are instrumental in replicating colonialism. Respect for Human Dignity - Be in solidarity with those among us experiencing injustice, oppression, the denial of dignity, and violation of human rights. Affirm the right to resist, repudiate, and challenge any expression of injustice.

### 3. What is the recommendation?

We urge both the Pacific Mountain Region of the United Church of Canada, and the General Council 45 of the United Church of Canada to specifically:

1. Add these elements of the organization of the United Church of Canada to the signatory list for the Arms Embargo Now call at <https://armsembargonow.ca/>
2. Undertake both a Pacific Mountain region-wide and General Council 45 nation-wide letter writing campaign to federal and provincial governmental representatives urging them to enact a two-way arms embargo that is comprehensive and binding

### 4. Background information:

Actions of the 41st council in 2012 included

Direct that United Church of Canada policy in respect to the conditions necessary for peace:

3) 4)

Continue to call for rejection of all forms of violence and of incitements of violence and hatred by all parties in the conflict. Continue to identify the end of the occupation as necessary for peace in the region by:

a. continuing to name the occupation as a major contributor to the injustice that underlies the violence of the region;

Currently Moderator Carmen Lansdowne and the United Church of Canada issues this statement: "we call on Canada to use all diplomatic channels and leverage points to secure an immediate and permanent ceasefire, and for Canada to implement a comprehensive and binding arms embargo"

This statement is followed by referring to: For more on this, see [UN Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese's findings of genocide and state obligation to impose an arms embargo to UNHRC; written report](#), and [Project Ploughshares 2023 report](#) noting "substantial risk" that Canadian military goods could contribute to abuses in Gaza.

## 5. How does this proposal help us to live into our church's commitments on equity?

Palestinian people are Indigenous to the Holy Land and we must apply our commitment to adopting UNDRIP not just for Indigenous Peoples in Canada, but the world over.

### **For the body transmitting this proposal to the General Council:**

Please select the appropriate option and provide the key discussion points for items being forwarded to the General Council:

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree without forwarding to the General Council
- ☐ Disagree and forwarding to the General Council

If you have questions regarding this proposal, please send them to: [GCinfo@united-church.ca](mailto:GCinfo@united-church.ca)

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Originating Body: [Pacific Mountain Regional Council](#)