



Member of Parliament St. John's East  
Député de St. John's-Est

The Honourable Anthony Rota  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

May 14, 2021

Dear Mr. Speaker,

I am writing to give notice under Standing Order 52(2) that I will be seeking leave today, Friday, May 14, 2021, to propose an emergency debate on the urgent and escalating situation in Palestine and Israel.

Over the last week, there has been a marked escalation of violence in Gaza and occupied East Jerusalem, after weeks of increased tension over the forced eviction of Palestinians from their homes in Sheikh Jarrah, Israeli police raids on Al-Aqsa Mosque and blocking Palestinian access to popular meeting spots.

Already, in Gaza, 119 Palestinians including 31 children have been killed and 830 others have been injured. Rockets indiscriminately launched from Gaza have also killed seven Israelis. Urgent de-escalation is needed to prevent further loss of life as both Palestinians and Israelis have the right to live in safety and security.

However, there is no indication that the long-term situation will be peacefully resolved without leadership from countries, such as Canada, which has an important role to play in ensuring that human rights are respected, and international law is upheld. The time has come for an end to the occupation and lasting peace guided by the principles of mutual recognition and respect for the national aspirations of both peoples.

While the Government of Canada has so far expressed its grave concern, called for "the immediate de-escalation of tensions and an end to the violence," and stated its commitment "to the goal of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East," it has not taken any active measures to support peace in the region. The government continues to sell arms to Israel, undermining our commitment to peace and ability to play a credible role.

Canadians are deeply concerned and want to see our government take an active approach to build a just and sustainable solution for Palestinians and Israelis, and it is critical that Canadian foreign policy be informed by the urgent debate of Parliamentarians.

I thank you for the careful consideration of this application.

Respectfully,

Jack Harris, Q.C., M.P.  
St. John's East  
New Democrat Foreign Affairs Critic