

ARMS EMBARGO **NOW**

5 MYTHS

**THE CANADIAN
GOVERNMENT WANTS
YOU TO BELIEVE ABOUT
THE CANADA-ISRAEL
ARMS TRADE**

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MYTH:

Canada has already imposed an arms embargo on Israel. When Parliament passed the non-binding motion put forward by the NDP on March 18th, they passed a resolution for an arms embargo and the Trudeau government enacted it. This issue is settled.

FACT:

This is FALSE. The Liberal Government has not imposed an arms embargo on Israel.

Fact: In March, the NDP put forward a motion in Parliament that called on Canada to “suspend all trade in military goods and technology with Israel.” This was basically a call for a comprehensive arms embargo on Israel. To avoid a split in the Liberal caucus, at least 70 members of whom were going to vote for the motion, the Trudeau government negotiated a watered-down version of the motion. It included a clause to “cease the further authorization and transfer of arms exports to Israel to ensure compliance with Canada’s arms export regime...” That version of the motion passed with 204 in favour and 117 against. Almost all Liberal MPs, including Prime Minister Trudeau and Foreign Affairs Minister Joly voted in favour. Only the Conservatives and three other MPs voted against it.

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**FACT:
(cont.)**

Foreign Minister Melanie Joly said that she intended to honour the motion. However, the government has not provided any public evidence that it has formalized the cessation of arms export authorizations.

Moreover, suspending future export authorizations and transfers to Israel is not the same thing as instituting a full arms embargo on Israel.

It isn't even a full one-way arms embargo on Israel: It does not suspend and cancel previously approved export permits to Israel. It does not prevent Canadian companies from continuing to transfer weapons to Israel under previously approved permits.

And it certainly isn't a full arms embargo on Israel, which would require that the government not only stop the flow of all weapons and components to Israel, but also:

- close the loopholes that allow weapons components to be exported to the US and assembled into weapons systems like the F-35 and F-15 fighter jets before being sent on to Israel.
- stop buying and importing weapons, components and military and dual-use technology from Israel, and prohibit Canadian companies from doing so.

The Liberal government has not imposed a one-way arms embargo on Israel, and it has not imposed a comprehensive two-way arms embargo on Israel.

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MYTH:

The Liberal government has stopped exports of arms to Israel.

This is FALSE.

FACT:

Fact: The government says it has temporarily suspended the authorization of new arms export permits to Israel since January 8, 2024. However, the office of Minister of Foreign Affairs Melanie Joly has specifically said that arms export permits approved before January 8 remain in effect.

It's worth remembering that between October and December 2023, the most deadly period of Israel's assault on Gaza, Global Affairs Canada approved \$28.5 million dollars in arms export permits to Israel, more than in 2022 or any other year on record.

The government has not canceled or suspended those permits, or any of the permits from previous years that were still open. Thus weapons and components can continue to be transferred to Israel under hundreds of permits approved pre-January 8.

What's more, indirect weapons transfers to Israel via the U.S. proceeds unimpeded. Weapons components made in Canada continue to be exported to the United States for assembly into weapons systems, including the F-35 fighter jet, that are then sent on to Israel. The transfer of military goods and technology to the U.S. does not, for the most part, require export permits, and there is little oversight or control over the transfer of these components. A true arms embargo on Israel would close this major loophole.

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MYTH:

The Liberal government has suspended approvals of all arms export permits to Israel.

FACT:

This may be true, but the government has offered the public no evidence to prove it.

The Liberal government says that it has not approved any new arms export permits to Israel since January 8, 2024. However, Global Affairs Canada has not formalized the suspension by publishing a notice to exporters on the GAC website used for this purpose as is customary.

Moreover, from October to December 2023, the most deadly and destructive period of Israel's assault on Gaza, Global Affairs Canada approved \$28.5 million dollars in arms export permits to Israel – exceeding the annual high of the past 30-years. These, like other previously approved permits, have not been canceled or suspended by the Liberal government.

In fact, information released by Global Affairs Canada in July shows that there is \$107.7 million dollars worth of active permits for export to Israel, of which about 12% has already been transferred. That leaves roughly \$95 million dollars worth of military exports which could flow directly to Israel from Canada before the permits expire by the end of 2025.

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MYTH:

Any permits issued since October 7, 2023, have been for “non-lethal” equipment, and any permits that remain valid since approvals were suspended on January 8, 2024 are equally for non-lethal equipment.

FACT:

This is misleading.

Fact: Since October, the Liberal government has used the “non-lethal” qualifier a lot to describe arms exports to Israel it has approved. However, the term has no legal meaning, does not appear in the domestic or international laws governing the arms trade, and Global Affairs Canada has generally avoided giving examples of “non-lethal” arms exports to journalists who have asked what it means. It is likely they are using the term to describe weapons components, including components in lethal weapons systems.

We don't know exactly what weapons systems the components approved for export are destined for, due to the secrecy and opacity of Canada's weapons export regime. However, we do know that in 2023, \$10,458,545.34 worth of these exports, were used by Israeli companies in “Bombs, torpedoes, rockets, missiles, other explosive devices and charges and related equipment and accessories, and specially designed components therefor” according to Global Affairs Canada's own data. Another \$4,368,437.83 worth were used in “Aircraft”, “lighter-than-air vehicles”, “unmanned aerial vehicles” (“UAVs”), aero-engines and “aircraft” equipment, related equipment, and components, specially designed or modified for military use.”

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MYTH:

The Government of Canada does not provide any arms or military support to Israel.

FACT:

This is misleading and the statement has been deployed by Liberal ministers in ways that obfuscate Canada's complicity in Israel's assault on Gaza when constituents have raised questions about Canada's arms trade with Israel.

Fact: The Canadian government does not *give* or *send* weapons to Israel through a military aid program. However, Canadian companies *do sell and export* weapons, components and military technology to Israeli companies, and this takes place with the express authorization of Global Affairs Canada. Additionally, Canadian companies *do* export weapons components to the United States for assembly into systems that are then sold, exported, or given to Israel. These include the F-35 and F-15 fighter jets as well as the AH-64 Apache helicopter, all of which the Israeli Air Force is using to bomb Gaza and kill Palestinians. This is what we are talking about when we say that Canada is arming Israel.

Moreover, Canada and Israel have signed a strategic partnership (the Canada-Israel Strategic Partnership) with a significant Defence and Security component which includes a commitment to military cooperation. This means regular joint training opportunities for their security forces and increasing military research and development (R&D), defence material cooperation, and defence procurement opportunities. Defense Minister Blair has confirmed that the relationship between the Canadian and Israeli military has not changed since Oct. 7 and they are still engaged in training exercises together.