

# The Globe And Mail

## The Hamas question

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During a fragile ceasefire between Hamas and Fatah, and lessening hostilities between Israel and Palestine, Prime Minister Stephen Harper uses inflammatory language that carves a dangerous role for Canada.

People living in Gaza and the West Bank voted last January. They did not vote to destroy Israel, nor do they want this. Palestinians voted against corruption and impoverishment and for local candidates who offered honesty, jobs and social services. Hamas, in some communities, is the only source of clinics, schools and community services.

Canada was the first country to cut off aid. This nourished the despair of the poor and cut tens of thousands from pay cheques, opening new space for the encroachment of Islamic extremists.

If no new action for peace is taken now, the region will face stronger and prolonged violence that might spill over beyond the region. Canada should use its diplomatic and moral authority to promote a major new front of dialogue and mediation.

This year when Hanukkah, Eid el-Adha and Christmas are aligned, may people of goodwill promote justice with words of peace.

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