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Global Impact of Transnational Repression

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Introduction

The threat was loud and clear.

“We the Handala Hack team, the loyal followers of the supreme leader Ali Hosseini Khamenei, declare war on all the enemies of Islam in the West. Our partners, the CJNG cartel in America and Canada, have been given a list of our enemies who are responsible for our great leader’s death. Elica Le Bon and Goldie Ghamari, you laughed like hyenas and called for war on our great leader during the Piers Morgan show. We have hacked and revealed your home addresses in LA and Ottawa to our partners in the CJNG who are in California and Ontario now. Both of you will be executed soon, and we have offered a reward of \$250,000 for the operatives who kill and behead both of you.”¹

Canadian-Iranian activist Goldie Ghamari — a former Ontario politician living in Ottawa — and Iranian-American activist Elica Le Bon, who resides in Los Angeles, received this message via email on March 1, 2026, days after appearing on the UK-based talk show *Piers Morgan Uncensored*, where they voiced support for then-imminent U.S. and Israeli military strikes against the Islamic Republic of Iran.² The CJNG refers to the *Cártel Jalisco Nueva Generación*, or the Jalisco New Generation Cartel, a criminal syndicate in Mexico with a history of violence and drug trafficking; Ottawa designated it as a terrorist organization in February 2025.³ Handala is a front for Iran’s notorious Ministry of Intelligence (MOI).⁴ On March 19, the U.S. Department of Justice announced the seizure of four web domains, including Handala’s, describing the move “as part of an ongoing effort to disrupt hacking and transnational repression schemes” by MOI.⁵

The episode marked only the latest instance of the Islamic Republic’s transnational repression around the world, including Canada, since 1979. But for the past several years, and particularly since the atrocities committed by Hamas, a proxy of Tehran, on October 7, 2023, attacks and threats against Iranians of all religions and Jews of all backgrounds have surged. This ominous development reflects the clerical regime’s increasing ideological influence and physical presence in Canada, which Tehran regards as an adversary due to its Western mores, democratic freedoms, and historic alliance with the United States.

¹ @elicalebon, X, March 1, 2026. (<https://x.com/elicalebon/status/2028258312366792744>); @gghamari, X, March 1, 2026. (<https://x.com/gghamari/status/2028224271076753496>) Grammatical and punctuation errors in the original text of the email are corrected for the sake of clarity.

² Piers Morgan Uncensored, “‘Clearly A War For ISRAEL!’ Iran Crisis Sparks ERUPTION On Piers Morgan Panel,” *YouTube*, February 24, 2026. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0IYix4xado>)

³ Public Safety Canada, “Government of Canada lists seven transnational criminal organizations as terrorist entities,” *Government of Canada*, February 20, 2025. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-safety-canada/news/2025/02/government-of-canada-lists-seven-transnational-criminal-organizations-as-terrorist-entities.html>)

⁴ Ari Ben Am and Ethan Sheinker, “6 Things To Know About Handala — Tehran’s Hackers Making Front Page News,” *Foundation for Defense of Democracies*, April 1, 2026. (<https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2026/04/01/6-things-to-know-about-handala-tehrans-hackers-making-front-page-news>)

⁵ U.S. Department of Justice, Press Release, “Justice Department Disrupts Iranian Cyber Enabled Psychological Operations,” March 19, 2026. (<https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-disrupts-iranian-cyber-enabled-psychological-operations>)

This testimony analyzes the nature and history of Iran’s transnational repression in Canada — and the radical Shiite Islamist creed that drives it. The testimony provides an overview of Tehran-inspired antisemitism in Canada, the presence of regime officials in the country, Tehran’s collaboration with criminal syndicates, and the range of threats, intimidation, and harassment directed at regime opponents. The testimony concludes by providing practical recommendations for the government to combat this threat, reduce attacks against Canadian-Iranians and Canadian Jews, and ultimately weaken the Islamic Republic’s influence.

Iran’s Ideology as a Driver of Transnational Repression

The regime in Iran sees transnational repression not merely as an effort to suppress dissent, but also as a means to advance Tehran’s radical conception of the divine will on a global scale — unconstrained by artificial borders.

As the Islamic Republic’s constitution states, Iran’s military seeks to fulfill “the ideological mission of jihad in God’s way; that is, extending the sovereignty of God’s law throughout the world.”⁶ In 2016, General Ahmad Qolampour, a senior official in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), said, “The Islamic Revolution does not have any borders. . . . The Islamic Revolution[ary] Guard Corps does not have the word ‘Iran’ in its title. This means that it seeks to defend the Islamic Revolution and its achievements without regard to particular borders.”⁷

In this sense, Iran and the Islamic Republic of Iran are not the same entities. Iran denotes the millennia-old civilization inhabiting the land long known as Persia and rooted in a distinct national identity that finds expression in a territory with borders. The Islamic Republic, however, is rooted in a violent and fundamentalist religious dogma whose aspirations transcend lines on a map. Put differently, and perhaps more aptly, the Islamic Republic constitutes a foreign entity that occupies Iran, regarding the country as a launching pad for its transnational ambitions.

At its core, Tehran’s ideology perceives Shiite Iran as the vanguard of authentic Islam in a Middle East adulterated by Western values and influence. The late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the Islamic Republic’s founding father and first supreme leader, contended that America and its allies present both physical and spiritual threats: They purportedly seek to eradicate Islam and transform the Middle East into a secular region marked by greed, violence, promiscuity, and Western imperialism. In this conspiratorial mentality, both Israel and the Sunni Arab states are agents of America, which covertly directs and shapes their policies as part of a heinous plot to overthrow the regime in Iran. Thus, stated Khomeini, the defeat of the West amounts to both a political goal and a religious imperative.⁸

This worldview continued to prevail unchanged under Khomeini’s disciple and successor, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, whom Israel killed in an airstrike on February 28, 2026. And the

⁶ “Iran (Islamic Republic of)’s Constitution of 1979 with Amendments through 1989,” *Constitute Project*, accessed April 20, 2026. (https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Iran_1989.pdf)

⁷ Nader Uskowi, *Temperature Rising: Iran’s Revolutionary Guards and Wars in the Middle East* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019), page 1.

⁸ See: Imam Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini (1941-1980)*, Translated and Annotated by Hamid Algar (Mizan Press, 1981).

ideology endures today under the present supreme leadership of his son Mojtaba Khamenei, who assumed office shortly thereafter. Under Khomeini and the late Khamenei, the Islamic Republic's campaign of transnational repression proceeded in more than 40 countries on six continents, including Canada, the United States, Argentina, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Pakistan, Turkey, Cyprus, Iraq, India, Azerbaijan, France, Austria, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Thailand, and the Philippines, among others.

In this context, Tehran has frequently attempted to portray Canada as a malign actor that embodies what the Islamic Republic sees as the worst qualities of the West. A 2017 article on Ali Khamenei's official website described Canada, along with the United States, France, Australia, and the United Kingdom, as among the world's "most Zionist-occupied countries" — a classic antisemitic trope.⁹ Likewise, the regime has criticized what it perceives as Ottawa's robust support for Israel's military campaign in Gaza, falsely accusing the Canadian government in 2025 of "complicity and deliberate participation in the genocide of the Palestinian people."¹⁰ Tehran has also condemned Canada's past treatment of its indigenous people — a legitimate concern expressed hypocritically and insincerely.¹¹

These allegations constitute part of an ideological disinformation campaign aimed at discrediting Canada's values and interests, including support for Israel, and portraying the Islamic Republic as a responsible regional power committed to human rights. The campaign also implicitly forms a conceptual basis for the Islamic Republic's transnational repression against Canada, including its efforts to inspire public support for the ideology of Tehran and its proxies in the country. Such support could lead — and often has led — to violence.

The Islamic Republic's Threat to Canada

"It's not really about me."

So declared former Minister of Justice Irwin Cotler in November 2024 shortly after news broke that the RCMP had foiled an imminent assassination attempt against him. "What we're talking here about," he continued, "is a phenomenon of transnational repression and assassination, and Iran has begun to target now in a more intensified way dissidents, human rights defenders, political leaders, etc. And it's a phenomenon that represents really a threat to our national security, our national sovereignty, our collective human rights."¹²

⁹ Kevin Barrett, "Zionists seek dissolution of Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Iran and Arabian Peninsula," *Khamenei.ir*, March 1, 2017. (<https://english.khamenei.ir/news/4674/Zionists-seek-dissolution-of-Syria-Lebanon-Iraq-Iran-and-Arabian>)

¹⁰ "Iran condemns Canada for manipulative use of human rights," *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran*, March 9, 2025. (<https://en.mfa.gov.ir/portal/newsview/762823/Iran-condemns-Canada-for-manipulative-use-of-human-rights>)

¹¹ Maryam Sinaiee, "Iran Slams Canada For UN Resolution Censuring Its Rights Abuses," *Iran International*, November 18, 2021. (<https://www.iranintl.com/en/20211118369138>)

¹² Spencer Van Dyk, "'It's not about me': Human rights activist Irwin Cotler on alleged Iranian assassination plot," *CTV News*, November 19, 2024. (<https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/article/its-not-about-me-human-rights-activist-irwin-cotler-on-alleged-iranian-assassination-plot>)

Cotler, who also served as Canada's first special envoy on preserving Holocaust remembrance and combatting antisemitism, is right. As a longstanding critic of the regime in Iran during his time both inside and outside government, Cotler had clearly provoked Tehran's ire. And the threat against regime detractors persists. As CSIS Director Dan Rogers said in November 2025, Canada has been "detecting, investigating, and disrupting potentially lethal threats against individuals in Canada" spearheaded by Iranian intelligence services.¹³ In March 2026, a CSIS spokesperson stated that the threat level from Iran "remains at 'Medium,' meaning that a violent extremist attack remains a realistic possibility."¹⁴

Such attacks, and threats of such attacks, have already occurred, as this testimony will now document. And Iran's broader history of malign conduct in Canada indicates that the danger is multifaceted, stemming from regime officials in the country, criminal syndicates, terrorist groups like Hezbollah, and lone actors inspired by the Islamic Republic's ideology. Concurrently, Tehran's proxies, officials, and agents have exploited Canadian freedoms to strengthen themselves financially and thereby expand their operational capacities.

Antisemitism

Irwin Cotler's Jewish identity, in addition to his robust criticism of the Islamic Republic as both a government official and a private citizen, may have played a partial role in animating Tehran's decision to seek his assassination. But there can be little doubt that the October 7 massacre — and the seven-front war it triggered against Israel that includes Iran, Gaza, the West Bank, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and Yemen — has inspired a surge in antisemitic attacks and sentiment against all Jews in Canada partly rooted in the ideology of the Islamic Republic and its proxies. Thus, while Tehran itself may not have directly committed, orchestrated, or ordered violence against particular Jews or Jewish institutions in Canada, the Islamic Republic has stoked the hatred responsible for the latest assaults against the Canadian Jewish community. In that sense, Tehran is complicit.

The sheer volume of antisemitic attacks against Canadian Jews, who constitute 1.4 percent of the Canadian population, or some 400,000 people, is sobering. Synagogues, Jewish-owned restaurants, Jewish schools, and Jewish-owned businesses have endured gunshots, Molotov cocktails, arson attempts, swastikas painted on walls, smashed windows, threatening phone calls, online harassment, and other forms of violence, intimidation, and vandalism. Rallies in major Canadian cities frequently extol Hamas, Hezbollah, and other proxies of Tehran. Anti-Israel and antisemitic rhetoric on college campuses has exploded, including explicit support for Iran's proxies and the October 7 atrocities — or, conversely, denial that Hamas terrorists committed rape as part of the atrocities. Even Holocaust denial has emerged. Support for the global Boycott,

¹³ Dan Rogers, "The Canadian Security Intelligence Service Director's Annual Speech," *Government of Canada*, November 13, 2025. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/security-intelligence-service/news/2025/11/the-canadian-security-intelligence-service-directors-annual-speech.html>)

¹⁴ Stephanie Ha, "CSIS says threat level related to Iran, proxies at 'Medium.' Here's what that means," *CTV News*, March 11, 2026. (<https://www.ctvnews.ca/politics/article/csis-says-threat-level-associated-with-iran-or-its-proxies-remains-unchanged-likely-to-continue>)

Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign against Israel has significantly increased. Jewish students on campus increasingly live in fear.¹⁵

In July 2025, Statistics Canada divulged that Canadian Jews experienced 920 police-reported incidents of hate crimes in 2024.¹⁶ Bnai Brith Canada reported that a total of 6,219 incidents of antisemitism occurred that year.¹⁷ The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs stated in July 2025 that Jews are the “most targeted religious group in the country” — or “25 times more likely to experience a hate crime than any other Canadian.”¹⁸ In the first two months of 2026, in Toronto alone, “22 antisemitic occurrences have been reported so far. This represents 63 per cent of all reported hate crime,” said Toronto’s deputy police chief Robert Johnson.¹⁹

Regime Officials in Canada

As many as 700 to 1,000 former regime officials reportedly reside in Canada, presenting a continuing national security risk.²⁰ Yet Ottawa has deported only one of them.²¹ Even family members of regime officials live in Canada. For example, Sina Ardeshir Larijani, the director of real estate finance at the Royal Bank of Canada in Vancouver, is the nephew of the late Ali Larijani, secretary of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council, who presided over the massacre of tens of thousands of Iranians in January 2026. Sina’s father is Fazel Ardeshir Larijani, a senior Iranian official who has served multiple roles in the regime.²² By contrast, Ali Larijani’s daughter Fatemeh Ardeshir Larijani previously lived in the United States, but Washington revoked her green card in early April and barred her from reentering the country.²³

¹⁵ Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, “Heightened Antisemitism in Canada and How to Confront It,” *House of Commons*, December 2024.

(<https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/441/JUST/Reports/RP13248912/justrp27/justrp27-e.pdf>)

¹⁶ Statistics Canada, “Table 6: Police-reported hate crimes, by detailed motivation, Canada, 2020 to 2024,”

Government of Canada, August 27, 2025. (<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/250722/t006a-eng.htm>)

¹⁷ Zev Stub, “Once ‘the best’ place for Jews, Canada sees rising antisemitism even after Gaza ceasefire,” *The Times of Israel*, November 17, 2025. (<https://www.timesofisrael.com/once-the-best-place-for-jews-canada-sees-rising-antisemitism-even-after-gaza-ceasefire/>)

¹⁸ “StatsCan: Jewish Canadians Targeted 25x More in Hate Crimes,” *Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs*, July 22, 2025. (https://www.cija.ca/statscan_jewish_canadians_targeted_25x_more_in_hate_crimes)

¹⁹ Lila Sarick, “Shots fired at Toronto synagogue, hours after Purim celebrations ended,” *The Canadian Jewish News*, March 3, 2026. (<https://thecjn.ca/news/shots-fired-at-toronto-synagogue-hours-after-purim-celebrations-ended>)

²⁰ David Spector and Gabrielle Fahmy, “Up to 1,000 Iranian ‘sleeper’ agents embedded in Canada: Gov’t official,” *New York Post*, March 28, 2026. (<https://nypost.com/2026/03/28/world-news/up-to-1000-iranian-sleeper-agents-embedded-in-canada-govt-official/>); Negar Mojtahedi and Brennan Leffler, “‘Far worse than you can imagine’: How Iran’s regime has ‘spread its tentacles’ in Canada,” *Global News*, November 11, 2023. (<https://globalnews.ca/news/10076891/iran-dissidents-threats-canada>)

²¹ Catharine Tunney, “Minister pressed why just 1 Iranian official deported after 24 deemed part of terror group,” *CBC News*, March 24, 2026. (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/irgc-deportation-iran-canada-9.7140778>)

²² *Regime Out*, accessed April 20, 2026. (<https://www.regimeout.com>)

²³ U.S. Department of State, Office of the Spokesperson, Media Note, “Secretary Rubio Revokes Green Cards of Foreign Nationals with Ties to Iranian Terror Regime,” April 4, 2026. (<https://www.state.gov/releases/office-of-the-spokesperson/2026/04/secretary-rubio-revokes-green-cards-of-foreign-nationals-with-ties-to-iranian-terror-regime>)

Iran's Use of Criminal Gangs as Operatives

Iran has hired members of criminal syndicates and cartels in Canada — including the CJNG and Hells Angels — to commit attacks against both Canadians and Americans. In a July 2025 joint statement, Canada and 13 other countries said Iranian intelligence services “are increasingly collaborating with international criminal organisations to target journalists, dissidents, Jewish citizens, and current and former officials in Europe and North America. This is unacceptable.”²⁴

In 2024, for example, the U.S. Department of Justice unsealed an indictment alleging that Iran-based narcotics trafficker Naji Sharif Zindashti, acting on behalf of MOI, recruited two Canadian Hells Angels members to assassinate two individuals living in America who fled Iran.²⁵

According to *The Washington Post*, U.S. officials said that the two intended victims were an IRGC officer who defected from the regime as well as his wife.²⁶ In February 2026, Canada sanctioned Zindashti for his “Iran-directed activities that undermine international peace, security or stability.”²⁷

Hezbollah in Canada

Hezbollah, a leading proxy of the Islamic Republic that Ottawa designated as a terrorist organization in 2002, has long maintained a presence in Canada, with the particular goal of raising funds through illicit means such as money laundering and exploiting the charitable and non-profit sectors. “Canada’s financial sector,” stated Canada’s Department of Finance in a 2025 report, “may also be exposed to risks emanating from correspondent banking relationships with institutions known or suspected of servicing Hezbollah in Lebanon.” Likewise, the report noted, “Hezbollah remains a highly active global player in the cocaine, heroin, fentanyl, and captagon trades, with trafficking networks spanning Latin America, Canada, and the US.”²⁸ Hezbollah has also raised funds through the used-car trade.²⁹

²⁴ Global Affairs Canada, “Joint Statement on Iranian State Threat Activity in Europe and North America,” *Government of Canada*, July 31, 2025. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2025/07/joint-statement-on-iranian-state-threat-activity-in-europe-and-north-america.html>)

²⁵ Tom Winter, Dan De Luce, and Corky Siemaszko, “Iranian man and two Hells Angels accused in murder-for-hire plot in U.S.,” *NBC News*, January 29, 2024. (<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/iranian-man-two-hells-angels-accused-murder-hire-plot-us-rcna136227>); U.S. Department of Justice, Press Release, “One Iranian and Two Canadian Nationals Indicted in Murder-for-Hire Scheme,” January 29, 2024.

(<https://www.justice.gov/archives/opa/pr/one-iranian-and-two-canadian-nationals-indicted-murder-hire-scheme>)

²⁶ Greg Miller, Souad Mekhennet, and Cate Brown, “Iran turns to Hells Angels and other criminal gangs to target critics,” *The Washington Post*, September 12, 2024. (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/09/12/iran-criminal-gangs-target-dissidents/>)

²⁷ Global Affairs Canada, “Backgrounder: Canada imposes additional sanctions against Iran,” *Government of Canada*, February 14, 2026. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2026/02/backgrounder-canada-imposes-additional-sanctions-against-iran.html>)

²⁸ Department of Finance, “2025 Assessment of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Risks in Canada,” *Government of Canada*, March 9, 2026. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/programs/financial-sector-policy/nira-neri/2025/report.html>)

²⁹ *Ibid.* See also: David Daoud, “Analysis: Hezbollah continues exploiting Canadian vehicular theft and money-laundering schemes,” *FDD’s Long War Journal*, September 2, 2025. (<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2025/09/analysis-hezbollah-continues-exploiting-canadian-vehicular-theft-and-money-laundering-avenues.php>)

These practices date back decades. In 2002, the *National Post* cited CSIS documents that “detail how Hezbollah has laundered tens of thousands of dollars through Canadian banks while drawing on the accounts to shop for military equipment. Hezbollah agents shopped for blasting devices, night-vision goggles, powerful computers and camera equipment used to record attacks against Israeli forces.”³⁰ In 2012, the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation announced that Washington had seized \$150 million in connection with “a massive, international scheme in which entities linked to Hizballah, including the now-defunct Lebanese Canadian Bank (LCB), used the U.S. financial system to launder narcotics trafficking and other criminal proceeds through West Africa and back into Lebanon.”³¹ In a more recent case, the RCMP and CSIS announced in March 2026 that they were reviewing the Seven Seas for International Trading and Logistics, a Vancouver company that Washington had just sanctioned for alleged ties to a \$100 million network financing Hezbollah.³²

Threats, Intimidation, and Harassment Against Regime Critics

The Islamic Republic, its agents, and its supporters have repeatedly threatened, intimidated, and harassed Iranian dissidents in Canada in an effort to suppress criticism of the regime. In one notable case reported in August 2025, Iranian authorities targeted two journalists working in Canada for *Iran International*, a London-based news broadcaster unsympathetic to the Islamic Republic, with threats of violence. One journalist said he received a message suggesting that regime agents would kidnap him and forcibly remove him from the country. The other said that Iranian authorities were intimidating his relatives in Iran in retaliation for his work. “It’s very, very intense and very threatening,” said Adam Baillie, a spokesman for *Iran International*. The network also reported that 45 of its approximately 745 journalists elsewhere in the world, including the United States, had received death threats, while 315 of its reporters’ relatives, most in Iran, were subject to other forms of intimidation.³³

Relatives of the victims of Iran’s January 2020 downing of Ukraine International Airlines Flight PS752 have endured such treatment as well. All 176 people on board, including 55 Canadian citizens and 30 permanent residents, were killed in the attack, which an Ontario judge described as “intentional” and “an act of terrorism.”³⁴ One prominent relative, Hamed Esmaeilion, former president of the Association of Families of Flight PS752 Victims, whose wife and nine-year-old daughter perished on the flight, has received repeated death threats for his efforts to secure

³⁰ Stewart Bell, “Hezbollah uses Canada as base: CSIS Agency wiretaps show suspected operatives using laundered money to buy materiel,” *National Post*, October 31, 2002. (<https://www.clhrf.com/documents/hezbollah.canada.htm>)

³¹ U.S. Attorney’s Office, Southern District of New York, “U.S. Government Seizes \$150 Million in Connection with Hizballah-Related Money Laundering Scheme,” *The FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigation*, August 20, 2012. (<https://archives.fbi.gov/archives/newyork/press-releases/2012/u.s.-government-seizes-150-million-in-connection-with-hizballah-related-money-laundering-scheme>)

³² Stewart Bell, “RCMP, CSIS reviewing Vancouver company accused of ties to Hezbollah, minister says,” *Global News*, March 25, 2026. (<https://globalnews.ca/news/11745676/rcmp-csis-reviewing-vancouver-company-hezbollah/>); U.S. Department of the Treasury, Press Release, “Treasury Sanctions Global Network Diverting Funds to Benefit Hizballah,” March 20, 2026. (<https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sb0420>)

³³ The Canadian Press, “Two journalists working in Canada targeted by regime, Iran International network says,” *CTV News*, August 8, 2025. (<https://www.ctvnews.ca/world/article/iran-international-network-says-two-journalists-working-in-canada-targeted-by-regime>)

³⁴ Stewart Bell, “Iran’s downing of Flight 752 was intentional act of terrorism, Ontario court rules,” *Global News*, May 20, 2021. (<https://globalnews.ca/news/7880194/iran-downing-flight-752-terrorism-ontario-court>)

justice.³⁵ “Iran targets Canada-based relatives of Flight PS752 victims to discourage them from criticizing the state,” said RCMP Deputy Commissioner Mark Flynn in 2024.³⁶

More recently, on March 1, 2026, gunfire struck an Ontario gym owned by Iranian-Canadian activist Salar Gholami, an outspoken opponent of the Islamic Republic’s repression. No casualties resulted, as the facility was unoccupied at the time. The perpetrator remains at large, but Gholami suspects Tehran.³⁷ “This is not just about the Iranian community anymore. It’s about Canadians,” Gholami said, echoing Irwin Cotler.³⁸

Policy Recommendations

Commendably, Canada has taken important steps to combat the Islamic Republic. For example, in 2024, it designated the IRGC as a terrorist organization under the Criminal Code.³⁹ Likewise, as of March 2026, Ottawa has sanctioned 227 Iranian individuals and 260 Iranian entities for a range of malign conduct, including nuclear activities, terrorism, and domestic repression.⁴⁰ It has also led resolutions at the UN General Assembly condemning the regime’s human rights abuses.⁴¹ And in 2024, in a joint action with the United States, Canada listed Samidoun, a group that raises funds for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), as a terrorist entity.⁴² PFLP, a Palestinian group responsible for killing Israeli civilians, has received military and financial support from Iran.⁴³

However, the threat from Tehran remains acute, and Ottawa must do far more to address it. Most importantly, Canada must dramatically reorient its foreign policy in the Middle East to bolster deterrence against Tehran, while taking robust action at home to combat, punish, and discredit the Islamic Republic’s influence and ideology.

³⁵ Maryam Sinaee, “Iran Crash Victims Spokesman Reveals ‘Death Threats’ After Dissident’s Murder In Canada,” *Iran International*, October 23, 2020. (<https://old.iranintl.com/en/world/iran-crash-victims-spokesman-reveals-%E2%80%98death-threats%E2%80%99-after-dissident%E2%80%99s-murder-canada>)

³⁶ Steven Chase and Colin Freeze, “Iran is targeting Canadian relatives of Flight 752 victims, RCMP tells foreign interference inquiry,” *The Globe and Mail*, October 3, 2024. (<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-iran-is-targeting-canadian-relatives-of-flight-752-victims-rcmp-tells>)

³⁷ Masih Khalatbari, “Iranian-owned, Toronto-area boxing gym targeted by gunfire,” *National Post*, March 2, 2026. (<https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/iranian-owned-toronto-area-boxing-gym-targeted-by-gunfire>)

³⁸ Negar Mojtahedi, “Gunfire hits Iranian-Canadian activist’s gym amid fears of Tehran-linked intimidation,” *Iran International*, March 4, 2026. (<https://www.iranintl.com/en/202603024296>)

³⁹ Public Safety Canada, “Government of Canada lists the IRGC as a terrorist entity,” *Government of Canada*, June 19, 2024. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-safety-canada/news/2024/06/government-of-canada-lists-the-irgc-as-a-terrorist-entity.html>)

⁴⁰ Global Affairs Canada, “Minister Anand announces additional sanctions against Iran,” *Government of Canada*, March 26, 2026. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2026/03/minister-anand-announces-additional-sanctions-against-iran.html>)

⁴¹ Global Affairs Canada, “Canada’s response to the Islamic Republic of Iran,” *Government of Canada*, June 19, 2024. (<https://www.international.gc.ca/country-pays/iran/relations.aspx?lang=eng>)

⁴² Public Safety Canada, “Government of Canada lists Samidoun as a terrorist entity,” *Government of Canada*, October 15, 2024. (<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-safety-canada/news/2024/10/government-of-canada-lists-samidoun-as-a-terrorist-entity.html>)

⁴³ Joe Truzman, “PFLP Boasts About its Ties to Iran,” *FDD’s Long War Journal*, November 11, 2021. (<https://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2021/11/pflp-boasts-about-its-ties-to-iran.php>)

1. Canada should voice explicit, unequivocal support for the latest U.S. and Israeli military campaign to degrade Iran’s military capabilities. Similarly, Ottawa should express backing for Israel’s latest military operations against Lebanon’s Hezbollah. Canada should also endorse further strikes against Iran and Hezbollah if ceasefire efforts in both regions fail.

As this testimony is submitted for publication, the United States has launched a blockade of the Strait of Hormuz in the wake of announcing a ceasefire between Washington and Tehran. America has also announced a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah. The ultimate trajectory of these developments remains unclear. However, until now, Prime Minister Mark Carney has spoken equivocally about U.S. and Israeli kinetic strikes against the Islamic Republic, initially expressing support for the campaign but subsequently voicing “regret” and calling for de-escalation. Carney also falsely claimed that the attacks appear to be “inconsistent with international law.”⁴⁴ Meanwhile, Ottawa unjustly condemned the Jewish state’s previous military intervention in Lebanon aimed at halting Hezbollah’s missile assaults.⁴⁵

This rhetoric sends the wrong message to Tehran, implying that Canada lacks the will to combat Iranian influence on its own soil and ultimately emboldening the regime’s Canadian backers. Similarly, Ottawa’s statements send a counterproductive message to Hezbollah, suggesting that the terrorist group can attempt to continue its illicit activities in Canada with impunity. Perhaps most problematically, Ottawa’s rhetoric reflects a lack of moral clarity, which is critical to ensure Canada’s credibility and deterrence against its adversaries. Moving forward, Prime Minister Carney should make clear that he now supports Washington and Jerusalem’s past military efforts, that he backs the blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, and that he will endorse further U.S. and Israeli strikes should Tehran remain intransigent. He should also rescind his criticism of Jerusalem’s retaliation against Hezbollah and instead state that he will support further Israeli military action in Lebanon should ceasefire efforts collapse.

2. Ottawa should expel all former Islamic Republic officials and their families from Canada.

The government’s inaction in deporting former regime officials should end. These officials pose a national security threat that requires greater urgency in Ottawa. Family members of regime officials warrant deportation as well, since Canada should constitute a refuge for those persecuted by the Islamic Republic — not a second home for those who benefit from its persecution. In addition, Canada must strengthen its visa and screening requirements to prevent additional Iranian officials and their families from entering the country in the future.

⁴⁴ Stephanie Taylor, “Carney says U.S. strikes on Iran appear to be ‘inconsistent with international law,’” *National Post*, March 3, 2026. (<https://nationalpost.com/news/politics/defence-minister-says-khamenei-was-a-force-for-evil-as-divisions-emerge-among-liberals-over-backing-of-u-s-strikes>) For analysis of how the U.S. and Israeli attacks on Iran are consistent with international law, see: Geoffrey Corn and Orde Kittrie, “You bet this is a war of choice. Just not America’s,” *The Washington Post*, March 11, 2026. (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2026/03/11/iran-united-states-israel-war>)

⁴⁵ “Joint statement on the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah,” *Prime Minister of Canada*, March 16, 2026. (<https://www.pm.gc.ca/en/news/statements/2026/03/16/joint-statement-conflict-between-israel-and-hezbollah>)

3. Canada should strengthen law enforcement cooperation with the United States to combat the Islamic Republic's partnerships with criminal syndicates, gangs, and terrorist proxies.

The emails from the hacker group threatening both Elica Le Bon and Goldie Ghamari indicate that Tehran regards the United States and Canada as joint targets. However, Washington took action within weeks to seize Handala's domain, whereas Ottawa remained passive and took no punitive measures. Similarly, America has sanctioned the Seven Seas for International Trading and Logistics, but Canada has not. U.S. and Canadian law enforcement agencies should establish a joint task force that works collaboratively to share intelligence, identify common threats, and take united action to punish, stop, and deter Iranian or Iranian-inspired aggressors.

4. Ottawa must speak with greater urgency, frequency, and clarity about antisemitic threats and their contemporary Islamist roots. Public addresses should not take place at gatherings of radical Islamist organizations.

While Prime Minister Carney has condemned antisemitism, he has done so intermittently and cautiously, hesitant to attribute it to radical, antisemitic Islamist sentiment in Canada. For example, in a statement issued on International Holocaust Remembrance Day, he denounced Jew-hatred, but — notwithstanding a passing reference to October 7 — made no mention of the Islamic Republic or other radical Islamist ideologues. Such omissions can no longer be the norm. Instead, he should explicitly condemn radical Islamist ideology and its foremost modern-day expression in the Tehran regime.

In another unforced error, Carney in June 2025 addressed the Muslim Association of Canada (MAC), a group that has expressed ideological affinity for the Muslim Brotherhood,⁴⁶ which developed the creed that played a role in shaping the Islamic Republic's own worldview.⁴⁷ According to the Canada Revenue Agency, MAC has also provided logistical support and funding to the International Relief Fund for the Afflicted and Needy, which has financial ties to Hamas.⁴⁸ During his speech, Carney declared that Muslims and Canada share key values. While such a statement may seem like a platitude, the prime minister's choice of venue effectively legitimized and bolstered a radical interpretation of Islam that opposes the messages of peace and multiculturalism he intended to champion. Carney and other Canadian leaders should avoid speaking to such audiences in the future.

⁴⁶ The Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy, "We Stand for Thee? The Growing Influence of the Muslim Brotherhood on Politics, Academia, and Civil Society in Canada," 2025. (https://isgap.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Canada_Report_Final_250622_EN_Final.pdf)

⁴⁷ Yusuf Ünal, "Sayyid Qutb in Iran: Translating the Islamist Ideologue in the Islamic Republic," *Journal of Islamic and Muslim Studies*, Volume 1, Number 2, November 2016, pages 35-60. (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316115723_Sayyid_Qutb_in_Iran_Translating_the_Islamist_Ideologue_in_the_Islamic_Republic); Siarhei Bohdan, "'They Were Going Together with the *Ikhwan*': The Influence of Muslim Brotherhood Thinkers on Shi'i Islamists during the Cold War," *The Middle East Journal*, Volume 74, Number 2, Summer 2020, pages 243-262.

(https://www.researchgate.net/publication/343742996_They_Were_Going_Together_with_the_Ikhwan_The_Influence_of_Muslim_Brotherhood_Thinkers_on_Shi'i_Islamists_during_the_Cold_War)

⁴⁸ Lorenzo Vidino and Sergio Altuna, "The Muslim Brotherhood in the West? Evidence from a Canadian Tax Authority Investigation," *Program on Extremism at The George Washington University*, January 2025.

(<https://extremism.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs5746/files/2025-01/The%20Muslim%20Brotherhood%20in%20the%20West.pdf>)