February 24, 2021

Three Canadian Jewish organizations protest proposed West Bank land purchases by KKL-JNF

We represent three Canadian Jewish organizations – all long time supporters of Israel – that strongly oppose the decision by the executive of the Keren Kayemet L'Israel-Jewish National Fund (KKL-JNF) to purchase private Palestinian land in the West Bank for the purpose of settlement expansion.

The burgeoning settlement enterprise presents a huge barrier to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through a two-state solution. Settlements, especially in areas deep in the heart of the West Bank, makes near impossible the creation of a viable, contiguous Palestinian state and thus block the two-state option. The KKL-JNF proposal – which includes purchasing land far from the Green Line – would greatly exacerbate an already untenable situation. If actuated, the plan would entrench the occupation and lead to endless conflict and violence. It is bad news for both Palestinians and Israelis; it would crush Palestinian aspirations for their own state and further undermine Israel's democracy and long-term future.

It is important to note that JNF Canada has distanced itself from this proposal. In its statement, JNF Canada has pointed out that it has long been autonomous from KKL-JNF and that it does not fund projects beyond the Green Line, in compliance with Canadian government regulations.

The KKL-JNF executive plan is yet to be voted upon by the full board of the organization after Israel's March 23 election. Many voices, both within Israel and in the Jewish Diaspora have spoken out against it. We urge all those who consider themselves friends of Israel to join the outcry and use their influence to overturn this decision. We urge the board of the KKL-JNF to vote against the proposal.

We remain committed to the values of Israel's founding vision – an Israel that is democratic, maintains its Jewish and moral character and strives for peace.

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