



Tuesday, November 11, 2025

PETITION TO TORONTO CITY COUNCIL

Subject: Immediate Cancellation of the November 17 Flag-Raising Ceremony at Toronto City Hall

Dear Mayor Chow and Members of Toronto City Council,

We, the undersigned residents and concerned citizens of Toronto and the Greater Area, call upon City Council to **immediately cancel** the planned flag-raising ceremony at Toronto City Hall on **November 17**, which intends to raise the **Palestinian flag** over municipal grounds.

1. Public-Safety Imperative

Since **October 7th**, Toronto has been plagued by **violent antisemitism unseen in this city since its founding**. Even the infamous **Christie Pits Riot of 1933**—once considered Toronto’s worst antisemitic outbreak—pales in comparison to the shocking reality we face today.

Since October 7th, nearly **1,000 demonstrators aligned with pro-Hamas groups** have gathered in our streets, many openly promoting hate, intimidation, and the glorification of terrorism.

It is **deeply offensive and dangerous** to reward this behaviour by raising a flag that, in the current climate, has become a symbol exploited by extremist elements to justify violence against Jewish Canadians.

Doing so would **embolden those responsible for this unrest**, further threaten the safety of our Jewish community, and undermine public trust in municipal institutions.

City Council’s foremost duty is to **protect all Torontonians from intimidation and harm**. Hosting a politically charged flag-raising under these volatile conditions would **risk violence, incitement, and public disorder**. The only responsible course of action is **cancellation**.

2. Procedural and Protocol Compliance

Toronto's Flag-Raising Policy requires compliance with **Canadian Heritage flag etiquette**, procedural integrity, and public-safety standards. The policy grants Protocol Services full discretion to **deny any request** that could endanger the public or contravene the City's neutral civic mandate.

Given the current environment of escalating threats and unrest, these requirements **cannot safely be met**. Proceeding with the event would therefore represent a **serious breach of due diligence** and the City's own governance protocols.

3. Municipal Neutrality and International Recognition

The proposed flag represents **Palestine — a non-established state**. Raising it from Toronto City Hall would improperly project the municipality into a **foreign political conflict**, violating its neutrality and risking division among residents.

More troublingly, such a gesture could be interpreted as an endorsement of antisemitic extremism and terrorism, which have recently targeted Jews both here in Toronto and abroad.

4. Call for Immediate Policy Suspension and Review

We urge Council to implement an **immediate moratorium on all new community or foreign flag-raising by non-state actors**, pending a full **Policy and Security Review**. This review should:

- Restrict flag-raising to the national flags of **countries with no ties to terrorist entities**.
 - Require **official consular sponsorship and verification**.
 - Empower City staff, in consultation with the **Toronto Police Service**, to **cancel any event where security threats are identified**; and
 - Affirm that the **official flagpoles of City Hall** are reserved solely for the flags of **Canada, Ontario, and Toronto**.
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5. Upholding Toronto's Values

Toronto's identity is built on peace, safety, and mutual respect. Allowing this flag-raising to proceed would signal **indifference to the suffering of Jewish Torontonians** and **legitimize those spreading hate** in our streets. Toronto Police reports that the Jewish community is the most impacted community when it comes to hate crime since October 7th.

We therefore call for the **immediate cancellation** of the November 17th flag-raising and the adoption of clear, citywide safeguards to prevent the misuse of public property for divisive, unsafe, and politically charged displays.

Respectfully submitted,

Avi Abraham Benlolo

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