

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MONTREAL, 2026-04-01

Joint Support for Montreal Woman Defamed by Mères au front & Journal de Montréal for Carrying the Official Flag of Iran at International Women’s Day

“I felt betrayed. I was scared and distressed.... I did not want the same thing to happen to other activists.”

– Khadija Barbe

We, the undersigned anti-war and social-justice-oriented organizations, denounce the harassment faced by Ms. Khadija Barbe at the Montreal International Women’s Day march held March 8th 2026, and the unprincipled behaviour of the organization she was volunteering for, Mères au front.

On March 8th, as a participant in the Montreal International Women’s Day march, Ms. Barbe was harassed for carrying the official flag of Iran in solidarity with the Iranian people, including women and children killed by the unprovoked joint US-Israeli attacks on the sovereign nation of Iran.

In response, the leadership of Mères au front, for whom Ms. Barbe was volunteering as the organization’s Palestine committee coordinator, dissociated from Ms. Barbe rather than standing up for her. The organization’s co-founder wrote on Facebook “Like all Islamic regimes, Iran’s go against the values of the movement”—flattening Muslim women’s experiences.

This reaction was used by [Le Journal de Montréal in an incendiary article](#), published on March 13th, which led to her continued harassment, online and otherwise, by racist and right-wing elements within the Quebec media and social media sphere, leading to her concern for her personal safety as well as that of her family.

The treatment received by Ms. Barbe reflects a broader pattern of islamophobia and anti-Iran sentiment generated by decades of diplomatic isolation and sanctions on Iran, which laid the groundwork for the current war.

We reject the myth that Western intervention in West Asia is in the interest of the workers and families who live there, and who are now making sacrifices with their lives to defend their sovereignty from the joint US-Israeli aggression. We believe in the Iranian people’s right to self-determination and civic freedoms, which can only be achieved through organic grassroots movements—not from bombs rained down from the sky.

In solidarity with Ms. Barbe, on March 27th the Iranian Canadian Congress published an [Open Letter to Les Meres au Front](#), which was initially sent privately to several leaders of the organization—with no reply at the time of this press release. Numerous other organizations have since added their voices in support:

- **Bruce Katz, Palestinian and Jewish Unity (PAJU):**

“[PAJU] fully endorses the Iranian Canadian Congress letter in support of Khadija Barbe.”

- **Ken Stone, treasurer, Hamilton Coalition to Stop The War:**

“The Hamilton Coalition To Stop The War endorses the Iranian Canadian Congress statement and pledges its support for Khadija Barbe.”

- **Palestine Vivra:**

“Both the article published in *Le Journal de Montréal* and the subsequent reaction from *Mères au Front* generated a strong sense of rejection among us.

We believe that solidarity should not only be applied to oppressed peoples in the abstract, but also within our own organizations when one of our own is attacked. In this regard, we publicly denounce the actions taken by *Mères au Front* against Khadija, particularly given the situation of vulnerability in which she was left.”

- **Belleville for Justice and Peace:**

“Belleville for Justice and Peace stand in solidarity with Ms. Khadija Barbe and condemn any and all attacks and harassment campaigns against her.

- **Pierre Jasmin, Les Artistes pour la Paix:**

“We believe that this embarrassing episode is now over, in order to together join the same UNITED struggle to save Iran, Lebanon and Palestine from destruction.”

- **Julie Desjardins, internal coordinator Québec solidaire Deux-Montagnes:**

“We stand behind Khadija.”

- **FREDA:**

“We, women of FREDA, remain in solidarity with our sister Khadija Barbe, a precious ally in our struggles. Next to us, she stands tall for indigenous sovereignty and for anti-colonial resistance, here as in Palestine. Her sincere engagement, her solidarity and her determination reinforce our voices and our resistances. Together, we advance for justice, dignity, and the liberation of our peoples.”

We reiterate our call for Mères au front to publicly apologize to Ms. Barbe and reconsider their public dissociation from her. Furthermore, we call on all organizations, parties, and unions united under the anti-war movement, to combat the positions of would-be Western saviours of Iranian and Muslim women, who are silent in the face of the devastation that war brings to those same women and their children.

Interested groups can email info@iccongress.ca to add their signatures.

Signed by:

Iranian Canadian Congress
Just Peace Advocates
Canadian BDS Coalition & International BDS Allies
Palestine Vivra
Palestinian and Jewish Unity (PAJU)
Les Artistes pour la Paix
Belleville for Justice and Peace
Hamilton Coalition to Stop the War
Québec solidaire Deux-Montagnes
FREDA (Front de Résistance Écologique et de Défense Autochtone)
John Philpot, lawyer
Coordinating council for Palestine (CC4P)

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