



May 6, 2026

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The Honourable Lena Metlege Diab, P.C., M.P.  
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The Honourable Anita Anand, P.C., M.P.  
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I am writing on behalf of the Association of Academic Staff University of Alberta (AASUA) to express great concern regarding the ongoing delays in the processing of study permits for 130 Palestinian graduate students who have been admitted to Canadian universities. Conflict conditions in Gaza and the broader region have created unreasonable barriers in securing application requirements, leaving these students' immigration applications in limbo.

These students have rightly earned their educational opportunities, securing admission, scholarship, and faculty supervision, yet bureaucratic barriers unfairly bar them from their studies. These delays greatly impact Canada's academic ecosystem as our country loses out on the opportunity for academic exchange with these exceptional students.

AASUA represents over 4,000 educators, researchers, librarians, and academic administrators at the UofA. Our members await 55 of these international graduate students who have been accepted into some 25 programs across our campuses — students of the highest calibre who have succeeded in rigorous admittance

Meetings by appointment

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competitions. For over a year, our members' research has been placed on hold, and the critical research funding promised for these students' teaching and research assistantships remains at risk.

Most vitally, our members are deeply concerned for their students' safety; we have received the distressing news that two students awaiting visas and study permits for another Canadian university have died, and others have been injured. The longer these students face delays, the greater the risk that our university will never know and be bettered by their academic contributions.

We urge the Government of Canada to take immediate and concrete action to resolve these excessive delays by:

- applying the same biometrics waivers and delivery solutions as in previous crises;
- expediting background checks and resolving the secondary screening directive; and
- ensuring that Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), Public Safety, and Foreign Affairs work together to ensure timely processing of these students' study permits.

With the next academic term quickly approaching, it is imperative that the government act expeditiously to ensure these educational opportunities are not lost.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this critical situation.

Sincerely,

Gordon Swaters  
AASUA President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G Swaters". The "G" is large and stylized, and "Swaters" is written in a cursive script.

cc.  
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