



June 2nd, 2009

Canadian Radio-television and
Telecommunications Commission
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0N2
Fax: 819-994-0218

cc: Ethnic Channels Group Limited

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Re: Broadcasting Al Jazeera English in Canada

Palestine House would like to express its support for the request by the Ethnic Channels Group Limited (ECGL) for the addition of Al-Jazeera English (AJE) to the list of eligible satellite services for distribution on a digital basis in Canada. It is important that Al-Jazeera English is available for Canadians to watch because Al-Jazeera English offers an alternative to the mainstream news channels and also appeals to a large audience which is interested in international news. It is also important to note that some of the senior positions of Al-Jazeera English are held by highly respected former Canadian newsmen such as Tony Breman and Avi Lewis. During the latest round of fighting in the Middle East which took place at the end of 2008, Al-Jazeera was the only news station to have reporters on the ground with live coverage of the devastation. During that period Al-Jazeera English's web video stream saw a 600-per-cent spike in worldwide viewership. The Arab Diaspora community in Canada watches Al-Jazeera Arabic on satellite and follows Al-Jazeera English on the internet. However, it is not only Arabs who watch Al-Jazeera. Al-Jazeera English has a worldwide following due to its coverage of world issues that many other news stations overlook. Al-Jazeera English has more journalists covering Africa than any other international news channel and more coverage of South America than any of their competitors. Al-Jazeera English's coverage of the Middle-East and the Arab world is unparalleled due to its inception as an Arab news channel with its main headquarters located in Qatar.

Al-Jazeera English has been on the air in the United Kingdom for 2 years and has an excellent cable record. Palestine House strongly supports the effort to bring Al-Jazeera English to Canada. There is a need for an alternative, reliable news source; Al-Jazeera English is just that.

Sincerely Yours.

Dr. Farid Ayad, President

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