



Le projet d'agrandissement de l'usine de fabrication de matériaux
énergétiques General Dynamics à Salaberry-de-Valleyfield:
des graves répercussions potentielles sur les plans
social, politique et environnemental

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Mémoire:

I am strongly opposed to the expansion of the General Dynamics manufacturing facility in Salaberry-de-Valleyfield.

As a company that manufactures weapons systems, ammunition, and other military technology being used in an ongoing fashion in foreign conflicts such as the genocide perpetrated by Israel in Palestine, General Dynamics is under significant social and political pressure. General Dynamics is one of a small number of companies that the Office of the High Commissioner of the United Nations Human Rights Office has specifically called on to immediately cease involvement in arms transfers to Israel¹. General Dynamics is the sole US manufacturer for key components of the MK-80 bomb series, which Israel has been using as its primary weapon in its assault on Gaza². Of these, the MK-84 munition has come under controversy for its extreme heat output leading to the apparent vaporization of targets, resulting in the inability to identify remains³. The existing facility is also the only supplier of M31A2 triple-base propellant in North America; this has been used by Israel to fire the hundreds of thousands of 155mm artillery shells used in the onslaughts on Gaza⁴.

Current political tensions among Canadians with respect to the US military industry (concerning domestic US violations of civil liberties, threats against Canada's sovereignty, and involvement in controversial overseas military activity) make contributing to growing the US military-industrial complex even more politically tenuous. The parliamentary debates surrounding Bill C-233⁵, concerning arms exports, show that there are persistent concerns at the level of Canadian federal government, and it is possible for future legislation to affect General Dynamics's business.

It would be risky for the Government of Québec to financially support a company in such a volatile situation whose future is uncertain. In addition, the government would be opening itself up to further social and political pressure. The government should note that there have already been dozens of protests at General Dynamics facilities worldwide in recent months⁶, and that these are only escalating. Many residents and constituents will likely still petition for the closure of the existing facility; however, by approving this expansion, the Government of Québec would greatly contribute to the mounting social and political pressure against General Dynamics and against governmental support for it.

In addition, as per the *Résumé de l'étude d'impact*⁷ significant concerns have been raised by the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke, with respect to potential environmental impacts on their territory. Aside from Band Councils, Indigenous hereditary leaders such as the Kanien'kehá:ka Kahnistensera have strongly objected to this project in another *mémoire* submitted to the BAPE. Among many other concerns, they cite that the air quality around the General Dynamics facility has already surpassed recommendations

¹ [States and companies must end arms transfers to Israel immediately or risk responsibility for human rights violations: UN experts | OHCHR](#)

² [MK80 Series General Purpose Bomb Bodies](#)

³ [Israel used weapons in Gaza that made thousands of Palestinians evaporate | Israel-Palestine conflict | Al Jazeera](#)

⁴ [Exposing the US loophole: how Canadian F-35 parts and explosives reach Israel | Arms Embargo](#)

⁵ [C-233 \(45-1\) - LEGISinfo - Parliament of Canada](#)

⁶ [CAAT - General Dynamics](#) (highlighting only a few instances of protest action)

⁷ [Résumé de l'étude d'impact: Projet d'agrandissement de l'usine de fabrication de matériaux énergétiques de General Dynamics sur le territoire de Salaberry-de-Valleyfield](#)

for the limit of carcinogenic particles by both the Minister of the Environment and the World Health Organization. The Québec Ministry of the Environment has itself raised concerns about increased water usage, contamination of water sources, destruction of terrestrial and aquatic habitats, as well as odours and noise from explosives testing that could significantly affect the quality of life of surrounding communities⁷. The *Résumé de l'étude d'impact* admits that the presence of nitrocellulose, nitroguanidine, nitroglycerin, acetone, and ethanol in high concentrations could present severe health effects, and that it would be possible for toxic materials to escape the site and contaminate the river⁷. It is impossible to guarantee that failures to contain hazardous substances, or similar accidents, will not occur. Given these concerns as well as the lack of consultation and consent from Indigenous hereditary leaders, moving forward with this project would potentially represent a serious violation of Indigenous sovereignty in addition to severe environmental risks.

Considering these numerous concerns, it would represent the least social, environmental, and political risk for Québec not to move forward with the expansion of this manufacturing facility.