

## **Action: Email the Mayor of Toronto Olivia Chow Now! Shut Down The Canadian International Air War Show Without Delay**

---

### **Instructions:**

1. Copy and paste the letter below into your email, make any changes you feel are necessary, add your name and contact information to the bottom of the email and send.
  2. Send to the Mayor of Toronto Olivia Chow at: [mayor\\_chow@toronto.ca](mailto:mayor_chow@toronto.ca).
- 

## **Shut Down The Canadian International Air War Show Without Delay**

Dear Mayor of Toronto Olivia Chow,

I am writing you as a concerned citizen regarding a major problem that occurs annually on the Labour Day long weekend in the City of Toronto: The Canadian International Air War Show. Looking beyond the face paint in the “family-friendly” spaces at The Ex reveals something closer to the truth: it’s *not* an “air show” but rather a massive war spectacle and military recruitment drive designed to glorify and normalize the training and use of high-tech war machines designed to kill “enemies” (AKA human beings) under the rubric of “defence.”

I am requesting that you use your political power to stop the 76<sup>th</sup> war show before it invades our city on August 30<sup>th</sup> – September 1, 2025. I propose that you make an emergency announcement under the heading of a public health measure as a means of justifying your intervention. Given that the war show re-traumatizes war survivors and normalizes state-sanctioned murder as a means of resolving human conflict I maintain that the public will appreciate your intervention.

The last thing a world saturated in conflict needs is a war show. As you may know, there are over 45 armed conflicts situated in places across the Middle East and North Africa, 35 non-international armed conflicts (NIACs) in other parts of Africa, 19 non-international armed conflicts (NIACs) in various parts of Asia, military occupations in Europe and 6 non-international armed conflicts in Latin America ([Geneva Academy](#)). Given the sheer number of conflicts around the world the question arises: Why is Toronto hosting a war show that re-traumatizes, glorifies and normalizes war?

Based on the psychological and emotional realities of war survivors, pro-military show casings of this type clearly violate the City of Toronto’s Public Health announcement pertaining to new mental health strategies such as, “*Our Health, Our City*,” which aims to improve mental health for “all residents of Toronto” ([Toronto Public Health 2023](#)). As a case in point, war survivors such as Antia Presnyak and Anton Babych have been vocal about their post-traumatic stress reactions to the war show since 2023 ([Eltherington 2023](#)). Given that Toronto is home to countless people from war torn countries ([Dundas 2024](#)) the question remains: Why is the City of Toronto re-traumatizing populations with the sounds and sights of terror in the skies?

According to the “[2025 Performers List](#),” deadly high-tech war machines such as the CF-18 Hornet, F-22 Raptor and F-35 Lighting II will be partaking in the “show.” It is shocking, disturbing and deeply disheartening that the City of Toronto advances the interests of weapons manufacturers such as, McDonnell Douglass and Lockheed Martin who are both the master architects of these deadly machines, over the mental health of Torontonians. Why is the City of Toronto permitting the transformation of our waterfront into a live advertisement for weapons

manufacturers? Point being, with the normalization of these deadly systems comes a reduction in resistance against massive government spending sprees aimed towards acquiring new fighter jets such as the F-35s our federal government has committed to purchasing from Lockheed Martin ([Global News](#)). Please note, these are the same deadly machines that are being used in Israel's livestreamed genocide in the Gaza Strip ([Fallon](#)), which only adds to the re-traumatization and normalization of both war and genocide.

While war is good for some (e.g., weapons manufacturers) it is bad for most. In concrete terms it has been approximated that 90 per cent of war casualties are in fact civilians ([UN Women Fact Sheet No. 5](#)). [UN Women](#) adds, the vast majority of these casualties are women and children in comparison to a century ago when the majority of casualties were military personnel (not that the death of military personnel makes it any better). With this in mind it is important to ask: Why is the City of Toronto committed to transforming our waterfront into a war spectacle that effectively erases the realities of war from the minds of its "viewers?"

Glossing over the facts and figures of Canada's longest war in Afghanistan (2001-2014), which resulted in 165 Canadian deaths, countless war veterans suffering with post-traumatic stress disorder ([Azzi & Foot 2021](#)), substance abuse, anxiety, insomnia, anger ([Terry](#)) and between 905,000 – 940,000 direct deaths in a series of post-9/11 wars stretched out across Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria and Yemen ([Watson 2025](#)), the war show constitutes a sanitized version of everything war. Instead of babies crying you hear children laughing and instead of bombs exploding you hear crowds cheering. The war show is a social engineering masterpiece designed to replace the lethality of war with the fantasy of non-lethality. The City of Toronto can and must do better than participating in the reproduction of this fantasy.

It is worth noting that Toronto's last war show crash occurred on September 2, 1995, which means people are also in physical danger. According to [City News](#), "Seven Royal Force crew members were killed when their plane stalled during a low altitude turn and crashed into Lake Ontario" (para. 11) (for a full list of CNE war show fatalities from 1949 – 1995 click on [City News](#)). Accordingly, war shows do not only pose a psychological and emotional threat but also a physical threat to all those in attendance. Evidently, there is much more behind the face paint offered in the "family-friendly" spaces at the war show.

**Please act now to permanently shut down the war show as a lack of attention to this issue may result in re-traumatization of war survivors, the normalization of everything war for everyone else and the possibility of a fatal crash as documented by [City News](#). Shut down the Canadian International War Show without delay.**

Sincerely,

[Name and contact information]