

December 16, 2025

Dear Secretary Rubio:

We, the undersigned 104 civil society organizations, write to respectfully request the inclusion of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in the President's implementation of Gaza's recovery.

We are grateful for the President's leadership and efforts in securing a ceasefire agreement and advancing peace in the region. As the plan moves into implementation, our organizations are deeply concerned that continued reluctance to utilize UNRWA's established and proven humanitarian and human development network may hinder hard-earned progress. For more than 75 years, UNRWA has worked in the Gaza Strip, developing a capacity and expertise that cannot be replicated or replaced. Excluding UNRWA from Gaza's rehabilitation risks slowing recovery, increasing instability, and undermining the very goals of the President's plan.

Global disinformation campaigns have eroded trust in the UN, including UNRWA. Such efforts serve to undermine the mandate established by the UN General Assembly and Security Council for the provision of life-saving services and support, pending a just resolution to the seven decades long plight of Palestine refugees. We urge the Administration to make decisions based on verified facts.

Over the past two years, four independent investigations into UNRWA's neutrality, launched at different times and taking different investigative perspectives, including one performed by the U.S. National Intelligence Council, all reached the same conclusion: UNRWA is, and remains, a neutral and impartial organization.<sup>1</sup> Importantly, the Council also noted that Israeli bias has led to mischaracterizations and distortions in assessments of UNRWA.<sup>2</sup>

Recent press accounts add further weight to the importance of grounding policy in fact. The State Department Inspector General is investigating potential Israeli violations of the Leahy Law<sup>3</sup>, and Israeli military lawyers have notified the United States of evidence that could support war-crime charges related to Israel's latest military campaign in Gaza. According to these reports, the intelligence "pointed to doubts within the Israeli military about the legality of its tactics that contrasted sharply with Israel's public stance defending its actions".<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The four investigations include: U.S. National Intelligence Council (Feb 2024), Independent Review of UNRWA Adherence to Neutrality (Colonna Report, August 2024), UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) investigation into 19 UNRWA staff (August 2024), ICJ Advisory Opinion on Israel's Obligations (October 2025)

<sup>2</sup> Wall Street Journal, 2/21/2024, "Intelligence report says Washington can't verify Israeli assertions about widespread links to militant groups"

<sup>3</sup> Washington Post, 10/30/2025, "Classified U.S. report finds backlog of hundreds of possible Israeli human rights violations"

<sup>4</sup> IBID

**UNRWA is still in Gaza and remains the backbone of the humanitarian response.**

Despite claims to the contrary, UNRWA's local workforce in Gaza continues delivering essential services despite their own displacement, exhaustion, and profound personal losses.

Today, UNRWA's 12,000 Gaza staff provide 40% of all primary healthcare, delivering 14,000 medical consultations every day. They bolster public health through immunizations, nutrition screenings, water-quality testing, and pest-control campaigns. Its wells, desalination systems, and waste-management services supply clean water and preserve dignity for hundreds of thousands of people. UNRWA also keeps education functioning, teaching more than 62,000 children in person, despite destroyed buildings, and supporting nearly 300,000 children through online learning.

No other organization has the decades of expertise, infrastructure, community trust, or cost-effectiveness to take on UNRWA's role as safely, efficiently, or at scale in Gaza. For Gaza's rehabilitation to succeed, UNRWA must be included as a core humanitarian partner.

President Trump's efforts to restore peace are historic. In that spirit, we respectfully urge the Administration to re-open lines of communication with UNRWA and allow the Agency to continue fulfilling its mandate in accordance with international humanitarian principles, until a just and lasting solution to the plight of Palestine refugees is secured.

We appreciate your consideration. Our organizations are prepared to work with the Administration to support Gaza's humanitarian needs, advance reconstruction efforts, and contribute to lasting peace in the region.

Signed,

UNRWA USA National Committee

**US & International Organizations**

A New Policy

Action Corps

ActionAid

AJP Action

Alliance of Baptists

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)

American Muslims for Palestine

Arab American Institute

Campaign for Peace, Disarmament & Common Security

Center for International Policy Advocacy  
Charity & Security Network  
Church World Service  
Churches for Middle East Peace  
Climate Refugees  
CODEPINK  
Community Alliance for Peace and Justice  
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces  
DAWN  
Demand Progress Education Fund  
Disciples Palestine Solidarity Movement  
Doctors Against Genocide  
Episcopal Peace Fellowship Palestine Israel Network  
For All  
Free Gaza Movement  
Friends Committee on National Legislation  
Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ  
Historians for Peace and Democracy  
If Americans Knew  
International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)  
J Street  
Just Foreign Policy  
Justice For All  
Legacies of War  
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns  
Methodist Federation for Social Action  
Migrant Roots Media  
MoveOn  
MPower Change Action Fund  
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd  
National Council of Churches  
New Jewish Narrative  
Nonviolence International  
Palestine Justice Network of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Palestinian Christian Alliance for Peace  
Partners for Progressive Israel  
Pax Christi USA  
Peace Action  
Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft  
Refugees International

ReThinking Foreign Policy  
Sisters of Mercy of The Americas  
Solidarity 2020 and Beyond  
The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
The Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy (TIMEP)  
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society  
Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East  
United Church of Christ  
US Council of Muslim Organizations (USCMO)  
US Lutheran Palestine Israel Justice Network  
USA-Palestine Mental Health Network  
Veterans for Peace  
Welcoming America

### **State & Local Organizations**

14 Friends of Palestine, Marin  
500+  
Al Otro Lado  
AlDameer Association for Human Rights – Gaza/Palestine  
All Saints Middle East Ministry  
Brooklyn for Peace  
Christian-Jewish Allies for a Just Peace for Israel/Palestine  
Civilized Humanity  
Delaware Churches for Middle East Peace  
Delawareans for Palestinian Human Rights  
Friends of Sabeel/Los Angeles  
KARAMA  
MARUF CT  
Maui for Palestine  
Middle East Justice and Peace Group, South Central Pennsylvania  
Minnesota Peace Project  
New Hampshire Veterans For Peace  
New Mexico Alliance for Justice in Palestine  
NH Council of Churches  
NH Peace Action  
Not In My Name, NH  
Oasis Legal Services  
Palestinian Christians for Justice  
Pax Christi Metro DC-Baltimore  
Pax Christi New York State

Peace Action New York State  
Peace Action of San Mateo County  
Peace Action of Wisconsin  
Peace, Justice, Sustainability NOW!  
PeaceHost.net  
Prince Georges County Peace and Justice Coalition Maryland  
River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation Middle East Task Force  
San Diego Faith Leaders for Palestine  
Southern New Hampshire Indivisible  
Taxpayers Against Genocide  
The Peace & Justice Center of Sonoma County  
The Riverside Church in the City of New York  
Voices for Justice in Palestine  
Western New York Peace Center  
Westminster Presbyterian Church Middle East Task Force  
Women Against War