

Cease Fire Letter to our national representatives to be approved by Presbytery

(Date)

Dear Government Official (Senator, Representative):

We, your constituents and people of faith and conscience, are writing with deep concern about the use of our tax dollars that continue to be spent on ongoing US military aid to Israel.

We ask plainly: why is our government sending bombs and weapons to Israel, and then calling for humanitarian aid for those that are bombed? This is morally unjustifiable to us.

Send bread, not bombs!

Further, the continuation of US funding for this ongoing genocide is fundamentally illegal according to established US law. The statutory provisions established by the "*Leahy Law*" prohibit the US Government from using funds to assist foreign security forces who are credibly implicated in the gross violation of human rights (GVHR).

Israel's intentional attacks against children, women, doctors, journalists, paramedics, civil servants, civilian homes, infrastructure, hospitals, ambulances, schools & universities, and most recently aid distribution centers are crystal clear examples of gross violations of human rights, all documented in high-definition.

Further, as the *International Court of Justice* case against Israel clearly lays out, these attacks are neither accidents nor ancillary to Israel's stated goals in their use of US bombs, missiles, tank artillery, attack helicopters, and fighter jets. Every level of Israel's civilian & military leadership has made it clear that their intention is to attack exactly these people and these targets in an effort to break their will and inhibit their ability to reproduce themselves as Palestinians.

This is a gross violation of human rights.

The contradictions of calling for a ceasefire and for life-saving aid to be sent to Gaza, while also greenlighting the sale of an additional \$14 Billion in lethal aid to Israel, are laid bare upon examining Section 620I of the Foreign Assistance Act, which "*prohibits the United States from providing security assistance or arms sales to any country... 'that prohibits or otherwise restricts, directly or indirectly, the transport or delivery of United States humanitarian assistance.'*"

The Palestinians of Gaza are now living through a man-made famine that is actively and undeniably being imposed upon it by Israel.

The effects of malnutrition resulting from this man-made famine will have lifelong developmental consequences for the children of Gaza. And, of course, the lasting emotional

burden of the more than 17,000 orphans who have lost both their parents in the last five months.

Furthermore, Israel's war against the people of Gaza is also a war against over a million women and girls, 650,000 of reproductive, menstruating age with no access to clean water nor personal sanitary products. It is a war against the 180 Gazan women who are giving birth every single day without adequate medical facilities in the midst of a man-made famine, resulting in unhealthy birthweights and a terrible increase in stillbirths, along with the horrors of having to undergo C-sections in the absence of any anesthetics. And, in the West Bank children are likewise being arrested, brutalized and interrogated.

Another result of Israel's war on the people of Gaza, effects climate change. The emissions from just the first 60 days following October 7, 2023, surpass the annual emissions for Central African Republic. Supporting and funding military activity by the United States.

Finally, a plurality of American citizens, including many within your district, across religious, racial, ethnic, and political lines, are in broad support for an immediate ceasefire. A meaningful ceasefire will not happen if the United States continues to empower Israel with ever-expanding military aid packages.

As people of faith and conscience, we refuse to remain silent to the complicity of the United States in Israel's genocide. We ask you to work towards a peaceful resolution that upholds human rights and international law.

The Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse, Central New York.

Approved by Social Justice Committee to send to May meeting of Presbytery. March 11, 2024