



**Alliance for  
Peacebuilding**

# AfP Statement on the Israel-Palestine Conflict

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **CONTACT**

Megan Schleicher | [megan@allianceforpeacebuilding.org](mailto:megan@allianceforpeacebuilding.org)

**Washington, D.C., USA.** – After the violence in May that led to [significant](#) death, destruction, and displacement, the [Alliance for Peacebuilding](#) (AfP) welcomed the [ceasefire](#) between Israel and Hamas. However, the fragile ceasefire announced on May 21st has already been broken. After decades of failed peace initiatives and periodic cycles of violent conflict, it is clear the status quo is not working.

Over the past decade, AfP refrained from issuing statements on the Israel/Palestine conflict.<sup>1</sup> However, the time is well overdue for AfP to rethink its policy and advocacy on this violent conflict. AfP’s vision is “*a world where each person feels secure, dignified, and included; a world where people build peace and manage conflict without violence.*” As a peacebuilding network, we can no longer sit on the sidelines, shying away from our stated vision in one of the longest-running violent conflicts in the world. AfP must ensure we are accountable to our values.

There is an urgent need for a new approach to this intractable conflict. AfP urges the U.S. government to immediately: (1) support inclusive and diverse peacebuilding processes and programs; (2) promote the equal rights, dignity, and safety of both Palestinians and Israelis; and (3) restore robust funding for critically needed humanitarian assistance through United Nations Relief and Works Agency

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<sup>1</sup> A non-exhaustive list of AfP members working on these issues active in this space includes: [Alliance for Middle East Peace](#), [American Friends Service Committee](#), [Saferworld](#), [International Civil Society Action Network](#), [Pax Christi International](#), [Peace Direct](#), [Jewish Voice for Peace](#), [War Prevention Initiative](#).



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(UNRWA), the Economic Support Fund, and other mechanisms. AfP outlines additional key recommendations for the Biden Administration and Congress below.

Change must involve acknowledging the systemic and structural inequality that exists between Israelis and Palestinians, as well as the policies and actions of all actors that perpetuate violence and exacerbate conflict dynamics in this region. Israel continues to [violate international humanitarian and human rights laws](#) against Palestinians through its discriminatory legal and political framework, as well as military occupation of Palestinian territories and policy of forced displacement. Within Israel, [unprecedented inter-communal and state-sanctioned violence](#) resulted in death, injuries, arrests, and damage to property with impunity. Concurrently, Hamas runs [afoul](#) of international law by indiscriminately firing rockets against Israeli targets, while the Palestinian Authority undermines free speech and civil society, arrests opposition voices, and refuses to hold elections. All of this disproportionately harms innocent Palestinian civilians, reduces trust, and inhibits peace.

Despite the ongoing violence, hundreds of local groups—including 150+ members of the [Alliance for Middle East Peace](#)—are working to promote equity and build cross-community ties. One group, [Abraham Initiatives](#), launched the Shared Cities Initiative to support Jewish-Arab city council coalitions in Israel's mixed cities, while others operate programs for youth ([Galilee Dreamers](#)), support businesses ([50:50 Startups](#)), and promote cross-border environmental cooperative ([Arava Institute](#)). While this work is vital, it is not sufficient to end the conflict and build sustainable peace.

AfP urges President Biden and the U.S. Congress to adopt a new approach to the Israeli- Palestinian conflict that prioritizes protecting both Israelis and Palestinians and leads to a sustainable peace process.

### ***The Biden Administration should take the following steps:***

- Leverage U.S. global leadership to mobilize the international community to engage in a long-term peace process, as well as to provide peacebuilding, development, humanitarian, human rights, and democracy and governance assistance. Consult with the European Union and other international partners to restart negotiations, as European Commission High



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Representative Joseph Borrell [recently stated](#), develop confidence-building measures to address the underlying conflict, and hold both governing authorities to account to ensure good faith participation.

- Work with the UN and international partners to procure and enforce a permanent ceasefire with clear conditions and prohibitions on provocations and kinetic actions.
- Call for a halt to all evictions and demolition of Palestinians and Palestinian property.
- Ensure U.S. public statements, policies, and assistance recognize and respect the equal rights, dignity, safety, and opportunities of both Palestinians and Israelis in accordance with President Biden's position that Palestinians and Israelis are "[to enjoy equal measures of freedom, prosperity, and democracy.](#)" Clearly and consistently assert the U.S. will support only policies that guarantee full equality and enfranchisement of all those living in territory under Israeli control. Reaffirm the U.S. stated position that Israeli settlements are inconsistent with international law. Increase pressure on Israel to recognize the rights of Palestinians.
- Ensure U.S. laws, agreements, and policies comply with international legal obligations, including [UNSC Resolution 2334](#) censuring Israeli occupation policies. Collaborate with the international community to hold Israel accountable to international law.
- Press for a new strategy as it pertains to Gaza, including, but not limited to, negotiating a path to end the Gaza blockade and calling for the free movement of Palestinians within and between different parts of the occupied Palestinian territories.
- Reject the Trump Administration's [peace plan](#) and create a new set of parameters for engagement based on the current situation and long-term peacebuilding objectives.
- Support the redesign and formation of a genuinely inclusive peace process, with people from all levels of society engaging at the negotiating table, including youth and women as called for in the Women, Peace, and Security Act and agenda.
- Support top-down and grassroots peacebuilding initiatives, including community and national dialogues, particularly with groups and individuals with diverse perspectives, including religious, youth, women, economic, social, and political leaders.
- Lead the world to establish an international fund for Israeli-Palestinian peace, modeled after the International Fund for Ireland, and create a truly



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transformative initiative to dramatically change attitudes on the ground in Palestine and Israel.

- Provide democracy and governance assistance to the Palestinian people in support of Palestinian elections and call for a clear timeline for voting.

### *Congress should take the following steps:*

- Call for and support U.S. leadership on a peace process to include securing the current ceasefire, ensuring no further evictions and settlements, and negotiating a pathway to ending the Gaza blockade.
- Authorize and appropriate funding to support a multilateral institution, leveraging U.S. taxpayer dollars with international support, modeled after the International Fund for Ireland, to capitalize on growing international interest in peacebuilding efforts and dramatically change attitudes on the ground in Palestine and Israel.
- Robustly fund people-to-people programming and economic development through the bipartisan [Nita M. Lowey Middle East Partnership for Peace Act \(MEPPA\)](#) to engage civil society and tackle escalating tensions and violence, build peace between Israelis and Palestinians, and strengthen the Palestinian economy and its private sector.
- Support initiatives to research and evaluate people-to-people peacebuilding programs to ensure future evidence-based programming does no harm, addresses power imbalances, empowers local organizations, and builds upon lessons learned to increase effectiveness.
- Fund diverse peacebuilding initiatives beyond people-to-people programming, including top-down and grassroots efforts, to address the drivers of political, social, religious, cultural, and economic inequities and conflict, as well civilian protection measures.
- Support programming that addresses the intergenerational trauma experienced by Israelis and Palestinians in order to promote reconciliation and participation in Track I and Track II peace processes.
- Ensure the funding promotes diverse and inclusive participation of religious, women, and youth leaders and facilitates Palestinian participation.
- Provide assistance to address intra- and inter-community conflict resolution and reconciliation.
- Ensure assistance to Israel complies with the Leahy Act, Arms Export Control Act, and [U.S. human rights laws](#). Further, condition aid on participation in confidence-building measures to facilitate an inclusive peace process.



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- Establish mechanisms for oversight, end-use monitoring, transparency, and accountability on all U.S. military and foreign assistance to Israel. Ensure U.S. aid is not going to support or expand settlements in Palestinian territory.
- Support resource management and energy-efficiency in Israel and the Palestinian territory, two key potential sources for conflict.
- Provide a national security waiver to the Administration to join UNESCO and other multilateral bodies that the U.S. left in recent years.
- Restore funds to UNRWA and provide ongoing and uninterrupted humanitarian assistance to Palestinians. Restore bilateral assistance through the Economic Support Fund to historic levels and ensure the timely delivery of humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza and the West Bank.

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*With over 140 member organizations, AfP brings together the largest development organizations, most innovative academic institutions, and influential humanitarian and faith-based groups to harness collective action for peace. We build coalitions in key areas of strategy and policy to elevate the entire peacebuilding field, tackling issues too large for any one organization to address alone.*