



May 23, 2022

Secretary Antony J. Blinken
U.S. Department of State
2201 C St NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken,

As the CEO of the largest U.S.-based alliance of humanitarian and development organizations working in the region, I write to express my deep concern about the escalating violence in the occupied Palestinian territories and Israel and its stark humanitarian consequences.

One year ago, escalations in rhetoric, home demolition, evictions, violence, and threats to Jerusalem's Status Quo led to open conflict in Gaza. Partners on the ground are experiencing these same conditions and raising the alarm, especially before Jerusalem Day this coming Sunday.

Last year's conflict resulted in significant destruction of civilian infrastructure, extreme limitations on movement, and a drastic rise in civilian casualties that pushed Gaza and its health system beyond the breaking point. Humanitarian partners in Gaza lost family members and homes, and NGO offices were destroyed.

The U.N. and Human Rights Watch reported that 260 Palestinians had been killed, half of them civilians, including 66 children and 40 women. The Gazan Health Ministry stated 1,948 individuals were wounded—of whom 610 were children and 400 were women. Thirteen people were killed in Israel and 114 injured by rocket attacks.

Gaza's civilian infrastructure has not recovered, and psychological injury is endemic. COVID-19 continues to be a threat and food security is a rising concern, as wheat imports are primarily from Ukraine and Russia. The shock of another conflict would be devastating.

Secretary Blinken, we urge you to use every diplomatic tool to prevent another war in Gaza.

To address this dire situation, we urge you to:

- Travel to the region without delay to personally speak with the parties to the hostilities.
- Speak out publicly against violations of international humanitarian law, including potential forced evictions of Palestinian residents, violence against peaceful protestors, and the targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure.
- Ensure uninterrupted humanitarian assistance and coordination to Gaza.

Sincerely,

Sam Worthington
President & CEO, InterAction

Chair

Carrie Hessler-Radelet
Global Communities

Vice Chair

Abby Maxman
Oxfam America

Treasurer

Carol Jenkins
World Learning

Ex Officio

Samuel Worthington
InterAction

Board of Directors

Sharif Aly
Islamic Relief USA

Amy Coughenour Betancourt
Cadasta Foundation

Dianne Calvi
Village Enterprise

Pape Gaye
IntraHealth International

Dr. Mohammed Hassan
Mercy Without Limits

Devin Hibbard
Street Business School

Charles Hooker
Keystone Human Services

Mohamed Idris
American Relief Agency for the
Horn of Africa

Koby Langley
American Red Cross

Kristin Lord
IREX

Eric Mitchell
Alliance to End Hunger

James E. Morgan
Physicians for Peace

Eskinder Negash
U.S. Committee for Refugees and
Immigrants

Michelle Nunn
CARE USA

Michael Nyenhuis
UNICEF USA

Dr. Tessie San Martin
FHI 360

Javaid Siddiqi
Helping Hand for Relief and
Development

Janti Soeripto
Save the Children

John T. Stephens
The BOMA Project

Rabih Torbay
Project HOPE

David A. Weiss
Global Communities

Jeff Whisenant
ReSurge International