



HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE & ECONOMIC AID

CMEP advocates for robust U.S. development and humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people, including via NGOs, as a critical component to create a climate conducive to progress toward peace.

Gaza and West Bank Access to clean water, reliable electricity, and adequate health care continue to deteriorate, endangering Gazans and also Israel and Egypt next door. Cuts to NGOs and the PA had similarly wide-ranging effects on the West Bank and Jerusalem. FY2020 assistance was withheld as political leverage - - even from Gaza hospitals run by CMEP church denominations, including the Anglican administered Al Ahli Hospital.

CMEP is heartened by the recent restoration of \$75 million USD to West Bank and Gaza programs as part of the FY2020 appropriations process. But the Administration continues to hold these funds under Administrative Review. CMEP calls for the immediate release of the \$75 million USD.

Restoring the U.S. contribution to UNRWA
(UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine) Until the FY2019 cut and FY2020 elimination, annual U.S. aid to refugees through UNRWA has been more than \$300m for years. UNRWA provides critical emergency food assistance, health care, and education to millions of Palestinian refugees throughout the Middle East. UNRWA's programs have become even more important in recent months, with Lebanon's economy collapsing, continuing war and economic crisis in Syria, and deepening catastrophe in Gaza. CMEP urges Congress to fund UNRWA at levels commensurate with past years, not less than \$360 million yearly.

Conditionality of U.S. Aid with respect to U.S. and International Law Withholding U.S. humanitarian aid from civilians to achieve political goals is not only immoral, in CMEP's view it also violates humanitarian principles of international law. CMEP absolutely opposes current aid denials in U.S. law, and by the Trump Administration, to Palestinians in general and to Gazans in particular. Blocking aid also undermines the goal of shared security for all peoples in the region, even more so during COVID-19.

CMEP also objects to the use of laws and policy to bar U.S. citizens from their right to engage in nonviolent resistance to injustice. CMEP is neutral on BDS, but supports the right of Americans to exert economic leverage on commercial and governmental actors to end unfair and unjust practices and policies which violate international laws and conventions.

Developed by Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP)

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