



WORKING TOGETHER:
Justice Can Prevail. Peace Is
Possible.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Joint Statement: US Sanctions on Palestinian Human Rights Organizations Erodes International Law

October 20, 2025, Washington D.C.- As organizations committed to civil society and open civic space, we, the undersigned, are gravely concerned by the U.S. government's (USG) decision to [impose sanctions](#) under [Executive Order \(EO\) 14203](#) against three leading Palestinian human rights organizations — [Al-Haq: Law in the Service of Man](#) (Al-Haq), [Al Mezan Center for Human Rights](#) (Al-Mezan), and the [Palestinian Centre for Human Rights](#) (PCHR) — for engaging with the [International Criminal Court](#) (ICC) to seek investigations into war crimes committed by Israel in Gaza. These [sanctions](#) create a chilling effect on humanitarian and human rights work in Gaza and [undermine](#) the abilities of civil society actors to pursue accountability under international law.

They further threaten the civil society infrastructure in Gaza, hinder the documentation of human rights abuses, impede fact-finding missions, and deter legal cooperation with the ICC. If this suppression continues, accountability for the gravest international crimes will erode.

We join the Sept. 4 response of Volker Türk, Chief of the UN [Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights](#) (OHCHR), who [unequivocally called](#) on the United States to “withdraw immediately these sanctions,” warning that they pose a dire threat to independent civil society organizations (CSOs) engaged in essential accountability work. These [calls were echoed](#) by civil society and legal organizations.

This escalation — from [sanctioning ICC individuals](#) to now targeting organizations and [UN officials](#) — infuses political reprisals into the international justice and accountability framework. It

deters organizations worldwide from pursuing accountability due to the fear of retaliation, creating a chilling effect on humanitarian and human rights work, where protection is most needed.

We urge the USG to immediately rescind the sanctions against Al-Haq, Al-Mezan, and PCHR.

Signatories:

1. A New Policy
2. American Civil Liberties Union
3. American Council for Judaism
4. American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)
5. Amnesty International USA
6. Ben and Jerry's Foundation
7. CAIR-WA (Council on American-Islamic Relations, Washington State Chapter)
8. Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC)
9. Center for Constitutional Rights
10. Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR)
11. Center for Jewish Nonviolence (CJNV)
12. Charity & Security Network
13. Churches for Middle East Peace
14. CIDSE - International Family of Catholic Social Justice Organisations
15. CIVICUS
16. CODEPINK
17. Confinium Strategies
18. Decolonize Sudan
19. Defence for Children International DCI
20. Defending Rights & Dissent
21. Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN)
22. DIAKONIA
23. Diana's List
24. Dominican Sisters of Sparkill
25. Dorchester People for Peace (DPP)
26. Ensaaf
27. European Legal Support Center (ELSC)
28. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)
29. Foundation for Middle East Peace
30. Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)
31. Funding Freedom
32. HEART to Grow
33. Historians for Peace and Democracy (HPAD)

34. Human Rights First
35. Human Rights Funders Network (HRFN)
36. Human Rights Watch (HRW)
37. IfNotNow Movement
38. Jewish Voice for Peace
39. Just Foreign Policy
40. Kenya Human Rights Commission
41. KinderUSA
42. Kolibri Foundation
43. MADRE
44. Maine Coalition for Palestine
45. Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns (MOGC)
46. Massachusetts Peace Action (MAPA)
47. MedGlobal
48. MENA Rights Group
49. Middle East Children's Alliance (MECA)
50. Middle East Democracy Center (MEDC)
51. Minnesota Peace Project
52. MPower Change Action Fund
53. Muslim Civic Coalition
54. Muslim Legal Fund of America (MLFA)
55. Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC)
56. National Lawyers Guild - Bay Area Chapter
57. Nonviolence International
58. Oxfam America
59. Palestine Legal
59. Pax Christi International
60. Peace Action
61. Presbyterian Church (USA), Office of Public Witness
62. Project South
63. Rabbis for Ceasefire (R4C)
64. Regenerative Economies Organizing Collaborative (REO)
65. ReThinking Foreign Policy (RTFP)
66. rochester, minnesota franciscan community
67. RootsAction
68. Sagner Family Foundation
69. Statewatch
70. Terre des hommes Italia (TDH IT)
71. The Carter Center

72. The Episcopal Church
73. The Palestinian Assembly for Liberation (PAL)
74. The Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft (QI)
75. United Against Inhumanity (UAI)
76. United for Peace & Justice (UFPJ)
77. Western States Legal Foundation (WSLF)
78. World BEYOND War
79. Zakat Foundation of America

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Formed in 1984, Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) is a coalition of more than 30 national church communions and organizations, including Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, and Evangelical traditions that works to encourage US policies that actively promote a comprehensive resolution to conflicts in the Middle East with a focus on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. CMEP works to mobilize US Christians to embrace a holistic perspective and to be advocates of equality, human rights, security, and justice for Israelis, Palestinians, and all people of the Middle East.

Recent CMEP Statements and Press Releases:

[Oct 14, 2025: CMEP is deeply honored to be named the 2025 recipient of the Frank Wolf International Religious Freedom Award by 21Wilberforce](#)

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) is deeply honored to be named the 2025 recipient of the Frank Wolf International Religious Freedom Award by 21Wilberforce. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Wissam al-Saliby and the 21Wilberforce Forum for this recognition of CMEP's commitment to advancing peace and protecting religious freedom in the Middle East.

[Oct 13, 2025: Churches for Middle East Peace \(CMEP\) Welcomes Implementation of the Peace Deal, the Release of Hostages, and the Exchange of Detainees](#)

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) welcomes the news that hostages and Palestinian prisoners are being released as part of the current ceasefire agreement. Since the tragic events of October 7, 2023, CMEP has called daily for the release of all hostages and prisoners held without due process, an end to the violence, and a commitment to protecting every human life. We acknowledge this development as a positive step in the right direction and as a sign that progress toward peace remains possible, even in the midst of immense suffering. We celebrate alongside families reunited who have longed to have their loved ones home.

Oct 10, 2025: Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) Launches Armenian Advisory Council at St. Vartan Cathedral in New York

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) proudly announces the launch of its Armenian Advisory Council, inaugurated on September 16, 2025, at the Haik and Alice Kavookjian Auditorium of St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral in New York City. The launch event, titled “From Ararat to the World,” brought together church leaders, ecumenical representatives, and members of the Armenian-American community for an evening of fellowship, cultural celebration, and shared commitment to justice and peace.

Oct 9, 2025: CMEP Welcomes Ceasefire Implementation with Cautious Hope and Calls for a Permanent End to the War on Gaza

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) welcomes the implementation of a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas with cautious optimism. After nearly two years of relentless warfare, widespread destruction, and devastating loss of life, we pray this agreement marks a turning point toward peace, justice, and healing for all who call the Holy Land home.

Oct 3, 2025: CMEP Condemns the Attacks Against the Sumud Gaza Flotilla

The Global Sumud Flotilla, nearly 50 ships carrying humanitarian aid for Gaza, has been violently attacked by Israeli forces in international waters, with hundreds of peaceful activists arrested. Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) condemns these illegal assaults, calls for the immediate release of all detainees and aid, and urges an end to the siege and ongoing massacres in Gaza.

See all of our [public statements](#) and [press releases](#).

Contact Us

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