

## **URGENT RESOLUTION In Support of Continued US Funding of the UN Agency Providing Relief to 1.9 Million Palestinians and a Ceasefire in Gaza to Ease Civilian Suffering**

**WHEREAS** in response to the attack by Hamas on October 7th 2023, the Israeli military has imposed a siege on the Gaza Strip, depriving 2.3 million Palestinians of water, food, shelter, electricity, fuel, access to medical care, transportation and Internet. In the more than one hundred days since, armed violence has claimed the lives of at least 26,000 Palestinians in Gaza (approximately two-thirds of whom are women and children), 347 in the West Bank, and over 1,200 people in Israel, with tens of thousands more wounded resulting in 1.9 million internally displaced people;

**WHEREAS** the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) is the primary UN agency providing humanitarian aid in Palestine and is funded by the US and other UN member states. UNRWA employs 1,300+ staff on the ground in Palestine, tasked with administering aid to the 1.9 million displaced people (a majority sheltering at UNRWA facilities);

**WHEREAS** UNRWA shelters have been routinely targeted by direct fire, including a multi-day siege beginning on January 24, 2024 of UNRWA Khan Younis Training College which houses 43,000 internally displaced people killing at least 13 and injuring 56. Since the beginning of the war, 357 people sheltering in UNRWA facilities across the region have been killed, 253 incidents impacting UNRWA premises and people inside have been reported, and 70 different UNRWA installations were directly hit, and 71 installations sustained collateral damage;

**WHEREAS** despite enduring over 150+ casualties among UNRWA staff, as of January 25, 2024, the agency has persevered and distributed flour to 309,779 families, vaccinated over 13,700 children against diseases such as measles, mumps and rubella, recorded 9,336 patient visits at UNRWA health facilities, and attended to 76,869 patients by UNRWA teams who continue to provide psychosocial first aid and other specialized protection services.

**WHEREAS** on January 25, 2024 the US announced it is suspending funding to UNRWA due to allegations made against agency staff. The UN immediately terminated 12 individuals and is taking the allegations seriously, but the US suspending UNRWA funding has led to further loss of funding from allies including but not limited to the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada and Italy now leaving millions at further risk in the greatest humanitarian catastrophe of the past decade.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democratic Central Committee condemns both the attack on October 7, 2023 by Hamas, the Israeli military's disproportionate response on the 2.3 million Palestinian people living in Gaza (nearly half of whom are children), and urgently opposes the US pulling funding from UNRWA, the UN agency tasked with supporting over 1.9 million Gazan internally displaced people.

**THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** the Washington State Democratic Central Committee values all human life as precious, views the targeting of civilians, no matter their faith

or ethnicity as a violation of humanitarian law. The Washington Democratic Party supports a ceasefire to immediately ease the suffering of 1.9 displaced people being cared for by the UNRWA, and strongly urges the US Government to continue funding the UNRWA as it works to provide long-term support on the ground in the region.

**THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democratic Central Committee affirms our commitment to combat antisemitism, Islamophobia, and anti-Palestinian/anti-Arab bigotry, our support for the people of both Israel and Palestine to live in peace and security, and the rights of all people to live, learn, work, play, pray and engage in peaceful protests without threats, intimidation, violence, or death.

*Passed by the Washington State Democratic Central Committee on January 28, 2024*