

November 7, 2023

The Honorable Antony J. Blinken
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
301 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Blinken and Secretary Mayorkas:

We write to you today as representatives of Americans for Justice in Palestine Action (AJP Action) and the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) with deep concern for the well-being and fundamental rights of Palestinians residing in the United States. We request the Biden Administration to extend Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and authorize Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) for Palestinians in the United States.

Our request is rooted in response to the persistent and deeply reprehensible genocidal actions of the far-right Israeli government, which, over the course of less than a month, have led to the devastating loss of more than 10,000 Palestinian civilians, including over 4,200 innocent children in Gaza. Our concern also extends to the escalating violence targeting Palestinians who live under Israeli apartheid policies in the occupied West Bank. These dire circumstances collectively create an environment where many Palestinians visiting and living in the United States fear for their safety and cannot safely return to their homeland.

Extending TPS and authorizing DED stands as a compassionate alternative to the recent legislative proposal introduced by Rep. Ryan Zinke and other Republicans. That proposal seeks to ban Palestinians from entering the United States and possibly expel those who are already here. We firmly believe that such a legislative measure, rooted in fear and exclusion, fundamentally contradicts the principles of compassion, justice, and equality that should guide our nation's policies.

In response to the ongoing humanitarian crisis, we implore the U.S. government to provide a temporary reprieve from deportation for Palestinians residing in the United States, granting them the opportunity to continue their lives and employment without the constant specter of removal. TPS and DED have been proven to be effective mechanisms that offer sanctuary and security to vulnerable communities confronting crises across the globe.

While we make this request, we continue to emphasize the importance of Palestinians in Gaza having the opportunity to reside in their homeland with justice, peace, and freedom, devoid of the perpetual threat of ethnic cleansing. Our appeal specifically pertains to those Palestinians

who are presently in the United States on limited visas with impending departure dates, and we strongly advocate for granting them the right to stay until the Israeli government ceases its campaign of mass violence in both the West Bank and Gaza.

In addition to the ongoing crisis in Gaza, Palestinians have endured decades of displacement and violence at the hands of the Israeli government and settlers. The recent escalation of the Israeli military in the conflict has only intensified the dire circumstances faced by Palestinians.

Finally, AJP Action and CAIR reiterate our previous calls for the Biden Administration to urgently advocate for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza to prevent any further loss of civilian life and to refrain from further arming the Israeli military, which has demonstrated a complete disregard for civilian lives and international law.

We sincerely request your immediate attention to this matter as we firmly believe that extending TPS and authorizing DED for Palestinians in the United States is a just and humane response to their plight.

The well-being and rights of Palestinians in the United States hinge upon our collective action, and we trust that you will make the right choice.

Sincerely,



Nihad Awad
CAIR National Executive Director



Dr. Osama Abu Irshaid
AJP Action Executive Director