

Open Letter to Minister Freeland Requesting UNRWA Funding Increase

September 2, 2018

Dear Minister Freeland and Minister Bibeau,

I write to you on behalf of the United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel (UNJPPI), a network of members and friends of the United Church of Canada, to ask that the government increase funding to UNRWA as a result of the decision by the Trump administration to cut all funding to this agency.

I and many members of UNJPPI have visited various UNRWA refugee camps where we have personally witnessed the important work of the UN in supporting this group of refugees who have suffered the most as a result of the creation of the state of Israel. What is of special concern is the basic health and education of children in the camps who are especially at risk because of this callous and heinous move by the Trump administration.

Palestinians have waited for 70 years to have their legitimate rights restored. Still, Israel refuses to comply with their obligations under the terms of the Geneva Conventions. It is increasingly important for your government to pressure Israel to negotiate a fair and just peace for Palestinians and an end to Israeli violations of international law.

We trust your government will follow the lead of the Germany in offering additional support to UNRWA so they can continue their good work of supporting this seemingly forgotten community of refugees.

Peace, Paix, Salaam, Shalom,

Rev. Steve Berube,

Chair: United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel