



ALLIANCE
OF AUSTRALIAN MUSLIMS



www.australianmuslims.org.au



info@australianmuslims.org.au



1300 573 937



GPO BOX 2660 Sydney
NSW 2001 Australia

01 February 2024

OPEN LETTER

TO THE PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER

URGENT DEMAND TO REINSTATE THE UNRWA FUNDING

The Hon. Anthony Albanese MP
PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA
Email: anthony.albanese.mp@aph.gov.au

Senator the Hon. Penny Wong
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF AUSTRALIA
Email: Senator.Wong@aph.gov.au

Dear Prime Minister & Foreign Minister,

We, the undersigned Australian Muslim organisations and Palestinian supporters, write to you to express our deep concerns and disappointment over the Australian Government's recent decision to suspend funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA). This decision significantly undermines vital humanitarian support in Gaza, a region already facing severe crisis and human catastrophe.

Recent statements by the World Health Organisation highlighted the growing risk of famine and disease outbreaks in Gaza, emphasising the urgent need for increased humanitarian aid. Additionally, the World Food Programme has warned of catastrophic hunger and the potential for famine if conflicts persist.

The Australian Government's suspension of UNRWA funding is a grave concern. It exacerbates the suffering of the Palestinian people in Gaza and can be perceived as collective punishment, contradicting the principles of humanitarian aid and justice. This is particularly alarming in light of the International Court of Justice's (ICJ) recent ruling mandating immediate assistance to Palestinians in Gaza.

We are also seriously concerned that the suspension was a reaction to allegations made by Israel against a few UNRWA employees without a thorough and independent investigation. UNRWA has shown its commitment to transparency and humanitarian causes by promptly addressing these allegations. In its statement on 27 January, UNRWA said "It is shocking to see a suspension of funds to the Agency in reaction to allegations against a small group of staff, especially given the immediate action that UNRWA took by terminating their contracts and asking for a transparent independent investigation. The United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), the highest investigative authority in the UN system, has already been seized of this very serious matter."





ALLIANCE

OF AUSTRALIAN MUSLIMS



www.australianmuslims.org.au



info@australianmuslims.org.au



1300 573 937



GPO BOX 2660 Sydney
NSW 2001 Australia

The UN Secretary-General António Guterres has appealed to the countries, including Australia, that suspended funding to the UN agency assisting Palestine refugees (UNRWA) to reconsider their decisions, referring to the tens of thousands of men and women who work for UNRWA, many in some of the most dangerous situations for humanitarian workers, should not be penalised.

UN Special Rapporteur Francesca Albanese has noted that defunding UNRWA at this critical time blatantly disregards the ICJ's recent decision and directives and could have serious legal implications. It neglects the urgent need for humanitarian aid in Gaza.

The suspension of funding to UNRWA will have catastrophic effects on over 5.9 million Palestinian refugees, particularly the 2 million in the Gaza Strip who rely on UNRWA's assistance for survival.

We strongly urge and demand the Australian Government to reconsider its decision and immediately reinstate UNRWA funding, fulfilling its moral and legal obligations to support those in dire need in Gaza and avoid further escalation of the Humanitarian crises in Gaza.

We look forward to your response and action in relation to this urgent matter.

Thank you

Best Regards,

Imam Shadi Alsuleiman

On behalf of the Alliance of Australian Muslims (AAM) and the undersigned organisations

CC: The Hon Tony Burke MP, *Member for Watson*

The Hon Jason Clare MP, *Member for Blaxland*

The Hon Ed Husic MP, *Member for Chifley*

The Hon Chris Bowen MP, *Member for McMahon*

The Hon Andrew Giles MP, *Member for Scullin*

The Hon Linda Burney MP, *Member for Barton*

The Hon Matt Keogh MP, *Member for Burt*





ALLIANCE

OF AUSTRALIAN MUSLIMS



www.australianmuslims.org.au



info@australianmuslims.org.au



1300 573 937



GPO BOX 2660 Sydney
NSW 2001 Australia

The Hon Tim Watts MP, *Member for Gellibrand*
The Hon Brendan O'Connor MP, *Member for Gorton*
The Hon Dr Jim Chalmers MP, *Member for Rankin*
The Hon Michelle Rowland MP, *Member for Greenway*
The Hon Clare O'Neil MP, *Member for Hotham*
The Hon Dr Anne Aly MP, *Member for Cowan*
The Hon Dr Andrew Leigh MP, *Member for Fenner*
The Hon Mark Dreyfus KC, MP, *Member for Isaacs*
The Hon Milton Dick MP, *Member for Oxley*
The Hon Ged Kearney MP, *Member for Cooper*
The Hon Bill Shorten MP, *Member for Maribyrnong*
Ms Maria Vamvakinou MP, *Member for Calwell*
Ms Anne Stanley MP, *Member for Werriwa*
Mr Julian Hill MP, *Member for Bruce*
Dr Andrew Charlton MP, *Member for Parramatta*
Ms Joanne Ryan MP, *Member for Lalor*
Dr Mike Freeland MP, *Member for Macarthur*
Ms Cassandra Fernando MP, *Member for Holt*
Mr Peter Khalil MP, *Member for Wills*
Ms Zaneta Mascarenhas MP, *Member for Swan*
Dr Daniel Mulino MP, *Member for Fraser*
Mr Steve Georganas MP, *Member for Adelaide*
Mr Matt Burnell MP, *Member for Spence*
Mr Graham Perrett MP, *Member for Moreton*
Ms Sally Sitou MP, *Member for Reid*
Mr Jerome Laxale MP, *Member for Bennelong*





ALLIANCE OF AUSTRALIAN MUSLIMS



www.australianmuslims.org.au



info@australianmuslims.org.au



1300 573 937



GPO BOX 2660 Sydney
NSW 2001 Australia

SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS:

ORGANISATION	STATE
1. Alliance of Australian Muslims (AAM)	NATIONAL
2. Australian National Imams Council (ANIC)	NATIONAL
3. Islamic Society of Victoria VIC	VIC
4. Islamic Council of Victoria	VIC
5. Queensland Muslims inc	QLD
6. United Muslims of Australia (UMA)	NSW
7. Islamic Society of South Australia	SA
8. Werribee Islamic Center	VIC
9. ACT Muslims Australia	ACT
10. The Queensland Charity and Welfare Association Inc	QLD
11. Kuraby Mosque - Masjid Al Farooq	QLD
12. Peshurst Mosque	NSW
13. Brothers in Need	NATIONAL
14. Auburn Islamic Community Centre	NSW
15. Muslim Cultural Youth Association Sydney (MCYAS)	NSW
16. Australian Muslim Advocacy Network (AMAN)	NATIONAL
17. Foundation of Islamic Studies and information	NSW
18. United Muslims of Northern Territory	NT
19. Muslim Legal Network	VIC
20. Board of Imams Victoria	VIC
21. Muslim Charitable Foundation	QLD
22. Muslim Business Council	QLD
23. United Muslims of Brisbane	QLD
24. Islamic Women's Welfare Association	NSW
25. Hills District Muslim Society	NSW
26. Darul Ulum Sydney Incorporated	NSW
27. Granville Youth Association	NSW
28. Seena Incorporated	NSW
29. Australasian Muslim Times AMUST	NSW
30. Islamic Practice and Dawah Circle (IPDC)	NATIONAL





ALLIANCE

OF AUSTRALIAN MUSLIMS



www.australianmuslims.org.au



info@australianmuslims.org.au



1300 573 937



GPO BOX 2660 Sydney
NSW 2001 Australia

	ORGANISATION	STATE
31.	Centre for Islamic Dakwah and Education NSW	NSW
32.	Islamic Society of Belconnen	ACT
33.	Academy Alive	QLD
34.	Ararat Islamic Welfare Association Inc.	VIC
35.	Australian Muslim Initiative	NSW
36.	Muhajirin Association for Community Development Inc	NSW
37.	Hurstville Mosque	NSW
38.	Australian Youth Community Centre (AYCC)	VIC
39.	Craigieburn Masjid and Community Centre	VIC
40.	Al Huda community Youth Center	QLD
41.	Al Huda educational institute	QLD
42.	Alhidayah Centre Inc (Wangara)	WA
43.	Al-Mustapha Institute of Brisbane	QLD
44.	Alliance Against Islamophobia	VIC
45.	Greater Springfield Welfare Society	QLD
46.	Australian Community Development Program	QLD
47.	IQRO FOUNDATION	NSW
48.	Roselands Mosque Association	NSW
49.	Qaswa House	WA
50.	Arabian Heritage Association Inc.	WA
51.	Indonesian Muslim Community of Victoria (IMCV)	VIC
52.	Islamic Economics Society Chapter Australia	NATIONAL
53.	Alquds Community Centre	NSW
54.	Islamic Society Of Darra	QLD
55.	Adelaide Mosque Islamic Society of South Australia	SA
56.	Islamic Women's Association Australia	NATIONAL
57.	Islamic Forum for Australian Muslims	NATIONAL
58.	FITYA Family and Youth Centre	NSW
59.	Australian MEFF Consortium	NSW
60.	Centre for Islamic Dakwah and Education NSW	NSW





ALLIANCE OF AUSTRALIAN MUSLIMS



www.australianmuslims.org.au



info@australianmuslims.org.au



1300 573 937



GPO BOX 2660 Sydney
NSW 2001 Australia

ORGANISATION	STATE
61. Islamic Foundation for Education & Welfare IFEW	NSW
62. Islamic Schools Association of Australia	NATIONAL
63. Al-Hafiz Quranic Centre	NSW
64. Al-Jannah Da'wah Centre	NSW
65. United Muslims of NSW	NSW
66. Melbourne Masjid Narre Warren	VIC
67. Afghan Community Support Association NSW	NSW
68. Benevolence Australia	VIC
69. El Dunnieh Sons Charity Association	NSW
70. General Union of Palestinian Engineers - Australia	NSW
71. Townsville Islamic Society	QLD
72. Islamic Information Centre of SA	SA
73. Gallipoli Turkish Cultural Foundation	NSW
74. Islamic Council of Christmas Island	NT
75. Sydney Turkish Islamic Culture & Mosque Association Inc.	NSW
76. MIA Liverpool Islamic Centre	NSW
77. NSW United Turkish Islamic Centre Inc.	NSW
78. Bonnyrigg Turkish Islamic Cultural Association	NSW
79. Canberra Islamic Centre	ACT
80. Centre for Cultural Relations - Alnawawi Centre	NSW
81. Marsden Park Masjid	NSW
82. Queanbeyan Masjid	NSW
83. Muslim Seniors Canberra	ACT
84. Islahi Islamic Youth Centre	NSW
85. Western Sydney Turkish Islamic Cultural Centre	NSW
86. The Australian Islamic House	NSW
87. Brisbane Islamic Centre	QLD
88. Tarneit Masjid	VIC
89. Muslim Women's Association of South Australia (MWASA)	SA

