

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 22, 2014

COMMITTEES:
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION
FOREIGN RELATIONS
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE
SMALL BUSINESS AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Honorable John Kerry
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20220

Dear Secretary Kerry:

We write to express our concerns about U.S. assistance to the Gaza reconstruction effort, especially donations to the United Nations Refugee and Works Agency (UNRWA).

In August, several of us wrote to you to request that the State Department launch an independent investigation into the role played by UNRWA in the recent conflict in Gaza. As you know, during the conflict, rockets were found on UNRWA property on three separate occasions, and rockets were fired into Israel from the vicinity of UNRWA facilities on multiple occasions. Information has also emerged regarding the potential exploitation of UNRWA's distribution network inside Gaza to by Hamas and other terrorist groups. We received a response in September that the State Department is awaiting the findings of UNRWA's ongoing internal investigation before considering further action. It is unclear when that investigation will be completed or how truly independent it will be.

Given UNRWA's record and the absence of an independent investigation into its actions during the conflict, we were dumbfounded when, on October 12th, you reiterated, without any qualification, that the United States would provide more than \$150 million to UNRWA programs in Gaza. This blind support sends the wrong message to an institution that has already become far too dependent on the largesse of the American taxpayer and repeatedly failed to ensure that its facilities and resources are not used by terrorists who wish to sow chaos and instability rather than aid the Palestinian people.

The United States should assist the people of Gaza as they rebuild after yet another Hamas-caused conflict. But this support cannot come at the expense of Israel's security. We will not support the provision of future U.S. assistance to entities or projects in Gaza unless the State Department assures Congress that UNRWA or the relevant recipient entity has imposed independently audited accountability measures to verifiably prevent any U.S. assistance from aiding, directly or indirectly, extremists' efforts to rearm or lay the groundwork for future attacks against Israel.

Without greater scrutiny of all U.S. funds being provided to entities in Gaza, it will be difficult to truly diminish Hamas' and other terrorist groups' influence in Gaza and will only make a resumption of violence more likely.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Marco Rubio', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Marco Rubio
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark Kirk', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

Mark Kirk
United States Senator