

# Quaker Action



## Building justice for all migrants

Countering anti-immigrant policies in Florida

pg. 6

Showing humanity through the border walls

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Creating an apartheid-free world

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**American  
Friends  
Service  
Committee**

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AFSC's Guadalupe De La Cruz (far right) at a graduation ceremony for youth leaders with AFSC Florida's Seeds of Resistance program. PHOTO: ADAM BARKAN

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# Quaker Action

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## Who we are

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) promotes a world free of violence, inequality, and oppression.

Guided by the Quaker belief in the divine light within each person, we nurture the seeds of change and the respect for human life to fundamentally transform our societies and institutions.

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## Cover photo

At the U.S.-Mexico border wall in San Diego, California, a migrant child caught between two 30-foot border walls in the U.S. offers flowers to people on the opposite side of the secondary barrier.

Photo: Pedro Rios/AFSC



American Friends Service Committee



## Letter from our general secretary

Children at a refugee camp in Dadaab, Kenya. PHOTO: RONNA BOLANTE/AFSC

This year more people than ever have been displaced from their homes in countries worldwide.

On a recent visit to the Dadaab refugee camps in Kenya, I had the opportunity to witness the challenges some are facing. Many refugees have walked over 100 miles to seek safety from violence, climate-driven droughts, and other difficult circumstances. Others have spent years in the camps, caught in a system that does not provide enough avenues for resettlement.

From our earliest days, AFSC has responded to help people impacted by war, poverty, persecution, and other emergencies. That experience still informs our work. In Europe, we have forged new partnerships to fund vital

assistance for Ukrainian refugees. When war broke out in Sudan, we helped human rights advocates evacuate and resettle. When an earthquake struck in Turkey and Syria, we delivered essential supplies. In communities across the U.S., we work tirelessly to change inhumane policies and create welcoming communities.

In this issue of Quaker Action, you'll read about those efforts and more. With your help, AFSC will keep supporting those seeking safety. We will also persist in essential long-term work to bring systemic change.



*Joyce*

**Joyce Ajlouny**  
General Secretary

## Join our Legacy Match!

When you make a gift to AFSC in your will, you ensure we have resources to pass on to future generations of change makers.

Thanks to a group of generous donors, your commitment can go even further. For a limited time, your planned gift will unlock \$10,000 from matching funds for immediate use at AFSC.

To learn more and make an immediate impact on AFSC's work, contact Alyssa Chatten at 888-588-2372 or [GiftPlanning@afsc.org](mailto:GiftPlanning@afsc.org), or visit [afsc.org/legacy-match](https://afsc.org/legacy-match). Thank you!



Hana Luna Her, an AFSC ArteVism Fellow, unveils her mural, "Wings of Change" in Fresno, California.

PHOTO: JOSHUA SLACK (ALSO AN ARTEVISM FELLOW)



Get Alumni Network updates and join our Facebook group!

[afsc.org/alumni](https://afsc.org/alumni)



**Tonya Histand**  
Director of Public Engagement

A new book highlights the work of AFSC staff in Vietnam and their efforts to repair the harms of war. “The Long Reckoning,” which was reviewed by The New York Times, features AFSC alums and peace activists **Adelaide (Lady) Borton, Jacqui Chagnon, and Roger Rumpf.**

Earlier this year, **Larry White**, the founder of AFSC’s Hope Lives for Lifers program, passed away at age 87. Since 2018, this program has provided support to more than 200 people serving long sentences in New York prisons.



Larry White. Photo: AFSC

The National Constitution Center in Philadelphia opened a new First Amendment Gallery this fall. It features AFSC alum and conscientious objector **Dan Seeger**. His successful Supreme Court case, *United States v. Seeger*, greatly expanded religious qualifications to allow pacifists exemption from military service.



Longtime AFSC committee member **Everett Mendelsohn** passed away in Cambridge, Massachusetts. As chairperson for an AFSC working group on the Middle East, he was the principal author of “A Compassionate Peace. A Future for the Middle East.”

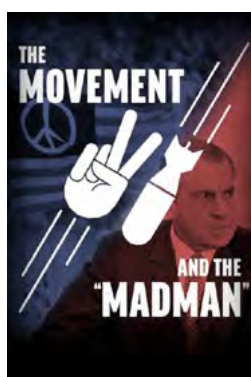


Photo: PBS

The recent PBS documentary “The Movement and the ‘Madman’” examines how two major anti-war protests in 1969 stopped President Nixon from escalating the U.S. war in Vietnam. The film draws from firsthand accounts of movement leaders, including AFSC alumni. The film’s executive producer is **Robert Levering** and features **David Hartsough, Stewart Meacham, George Willoughby, Ron Young, and Trudi Schutz.**

**Do you have news or stories to share? Email us at [alumni@afsc.org](mailto:alumni@afsc.org)**



In June, over 1,000 people came to Atlanta City Hall to rally and testify against the construction of Cop City. Photo: Elliot Liss

ATLANTA

Stop Cop City

In Atlanta, AFSC is part of a coalition of community members and organizations working to stop “Cop City.” If built, “Cop City” would be one of the largest militarized police training centers in the U.S. Plans include military-grade training facilities, a mock city in which to practice urban warfare, and dozens of shooting ranges. Police from around the country would be trained in tactics all too likely to be turned on protesters and communities of color. The project has also clearcut much of the

Weelaunee Forest—Atlanta’s largest green space—potentially causing surrounding areas to warm by as much as 10 degrees. Our Stop Cop City coalition has worked to ensure voters in Atlanta have their say on how their tax dollars are spent. We successfully gathered over 116,000 voter signatures to put a referendum on the ballot. That’s nearly double the number of signatures required—and more than the number of people who voted in Atlanta’s last mayoral election.

As of this writing, our coalition is urging the city to ensure a fair process in verifying signatures—and to uphold the right of Atlanta voters to have their voices heard. •



**Tim Franzen**  
Director, Atlantic Economic Justice Program





As part of "Cutting the Patriarchy," migrant women learn haircutting skills and analyze systems of oppression. Photo: Aimee Melo & Lisbeth Chávez

## MEXICO

### Cutting the Patriarchy

In a migrant shelter in Tijuana, Mexico, dozens of women wait to cross into the U.S. or resettle in Mexico. Several of them have found a lifeline in a project known as "Cortando el Patriarcado" (Cutting the Patriarchy). This project, co-founded by AFSC and Tijuana artist-activist Gaba Cortés, helps women learn haircutting skills and provides them with hairstyling tools. At the same time, they find a safe space to share their experiences as migrant women who have faced patriarchal violence.

During five weeks of workshops, participants learn a vocation that can help them earn an income wherever they are. At the same time, they analyze systems

of oppression—and recognize their own power to meet these challenges.

One participant told us, "The workshop planted in me the need to want to continue learning—and have more tools to not depend on other people and continue tolerating abuse."

This year, participants' children also got involved in the project. They learned photography to document their own migrant experiences. •



**Daniela Cortés**

Program Officer,  
Latin America and  
Caribbean region

## VICTORY

### Divesting from Israeli apartheid



Photo: Mohammad Khier

For years, AFSC has supported coalitions in pressuring corporations to cut ties with the Israeli occupation. This spring, we celebrated a major victory: G4S—the world's largest private security company—sold its last remaining business with the Israeli government.

The decision came after more than 13 years of global campaigning in which AFSC played a key role. G4S's complicity was first exposed in 2010 when it provided security services and equipment to illegal Israeli settlements, military checkpoints, and prisons. Over the following decade, the #StopG4S movement pressured institutions worldwide to stop contracting or investing with the company.

Amid mounting pressure, G4S sold nearly all its business activities in Israel in 2017—except its stake in the Israeli National Police Academy. Our coalition pressed on and in May of 2023 the company finally announced the sale of its last remaining business activity in Israel.

To learn how you can get involved in our efforts, read more about our new Apartheid-Free campaign on [page 15](#). •



**Noam Perry**

Coordinator, Economic  
Activism Program

## Q+A

### Countering anti-immigrant policies

An interview with Guadalupe De La Cruz, program director, AFSC Florida

**Q: How does AFSC support immigrants and other community members in Florida?**

**A:** Our work focuses on three areas. We advocate for the rights of immigrants and refugees by talking to local, state, and national officials. We provide legal services to community members who are trying to adjust their immigration status in the U.S. And through our Seeds of Resistance project, we provide political education and trauma-informed workshops for high school-age youth. We're working to create a new wave of leaders in our community to counter negative narratives about immigrants and undocumented community members.

**Q: This year, Gov. Ron DeSantis signed into law sweeping anti-immigrant legislation known as SB1718. How has this affected immigrants and their families?**

**A:** For years, Florida has been a very anti-immigrant state. Since 2018, we've seen an escalation in policies targeting undocumented people and immigrant communities.

SB1718 is now our biggest concern—and it's very broad. It makes it a felony for anyone to transport an undocumented person into Florida, even if it's a family member. It also invalidates some out-of-state driver's licenses issued to undocumented immigrants, putting people at greater risk of being detained if pulled over.

Under the law, employers with over 25 employees must use the government's E-Verify system to check workers' immigration status. That means people could lose their job or not get hired, making it much harder to support their families. As a result, many workers are deciding to leave Florida. That's also bad for employers and the economy, especially the agriculture industry.

In addition, the law requires health care providers to ask patients about their immigration status and report that data, including the cost of care, to the state. That has kept people from seeking needed medical care.

This law has created so much fear and forced families to uproot themselves and move to other states. Many community members have come to us, asking if they should leave.

**“Ultimately, we need permanent solutions and a pathway to citizenship for all immigrants—and for their rights and dignity to be respected.”**

**Q: How is AFSC helping communities navigate the new law?**

**A:** We're continuing to educate communities about their rights because there is so much misinformation out there. We're also connecting community members with legal services to help them with their cases and to assist with emergency plans in case a family member is detained or deported.

And we're making sure policymakers hear from people who are directly impacted. One way the Biden administration could help is by expanding the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) program. That would provide immediate relief from deportation for more people from certain countries afflicted by war, natural disasters, and other dangers.

Ultimately, we need permanent solutions and a pathway to citizenship for all immigrants—and for their rights and dignity to be respected. •



AFSC's Adriana Jasso speaks with migrants through the border wall. PHOTO: PEDRO RIOS/AFSC



# SHOWING HUMANITY THROUGH THE BORDER WALLS

At California's southern border, two 30-foot-tall steel barriers slice through the landscape—dividing the United States from Mexico. Earlier this year, hundreds of migrants found themselves trapped between these two border walls as they tried to reach the U.S.

Staff from AFSC and other human rights organizations first noticed a small group of migrants in the area in February. They had crossed the primary border wall from Mexico and were waiting to be picked up by U.S. Border Patrol agents for processing.

But instead of immediately bringing migrants into custody, as typically happens, Border Patrol agents left the migrants between the two walls for days—with no food, water, or protection from the cold. The space became an open-air holding cell.

“It was shocking to see them in between those walls,” says Nina Douglass, a volunteer with the Friends of Friendship Park Coalition, which includes AFSC. “Some migrants resorted to eating leaves from nearby bushes. Many of these people had already been through so much. Now they were being further traumatized.”

At the time, the U.S. was preparing for the end of Title 42, which was set to expire in May. Under that order, both the Trump and Biden administrations had used the COVID-19 pandemic as an

excuse to deny hundreds of thousands of migrants their right to seek asylum in the U.S. In place of Title 42, the Biden administration planned to institute what amounted to another asylum ban. “What we saw happening between those border walls was representative of a longtime pattern of abuse by Border Patrol,” says Pedro Rios, director of AFSC’s U.S.-Mexico Border Program. “Their modus operandi has always been to detain people in dangerous conditions. It’s also an extension of inhumane U.S. migration policies that have long denied migrants their human rights.”

For decades, AFSC has worked to expose this widespread, systemic abuse. Border Patrol uses military-style enforcement tactics, equipment, and strategies to control the border, including ATVs, drone planes, and military helicopters. Border Patrol has an egregious history of responding to asylum seekers with violence, sometimes even leading to migrant deaths.

Detaining migrants between the border walls was yet another case of the agency’s abuse and neglect. But it was one case where community members in San Diego knew they could do something to make a difference.

With support from AFSC and Friends of Friendship Park, community members mobilized to distribute water, food, diapers, and baby formula through the fence. Meanwhile, AFSC contacted Border Patrol officials about the situation, urging them to provide a source of drinking water and a restroom service. In response, the agency provided a single portable toilet, which quickly became unusable without regular cleaning. The agency failed to deliver the water tank it promised, saying it would only attract more migrants to the area.

Over two weeks in May, the number of migrants trapped between the walls grew to over 400 people. Still, Border Patrol refused to do more than provide each migrant with two granola bars and two small bottles of water daily—leaving many dehydrated and hungry.

But as the need grew, so did the humanity and generosity of the community members. Pedro and AFSC team members

Adriana Jasso and Benjamin Prado helped organize the response to ensure aid could reach everyone safely and equitably. They set up four stations that migrants could access by reaching through slots in the fence. One station offered a continuous source of water. A food station provided migrants with two meals per day. A third station allowed migrants to charge cell phones to stay in touch with loved ones at home and abroad. At the fourth station, people could get medical attention, including consulting with local doctors.

“As professional community organizers and human rights advocates, Pedro, Adriana, and Benjamin were able to analyze the situation and implement better organization,” Nina says. “They could also call on more community partners and others to help.”



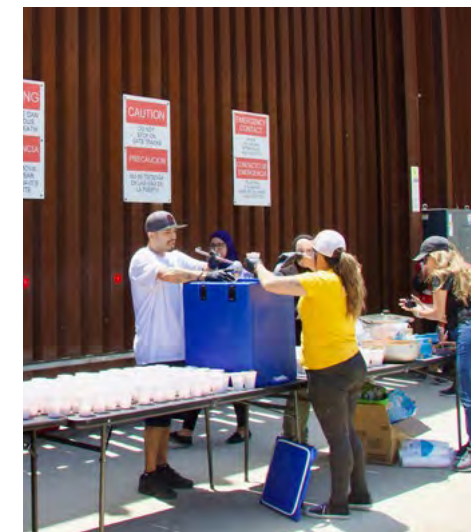
Each day, dozens of volunteers showed up to the wall, asking how they could contribute. One woman and her family provided home-cooked meals for hundreds of people. Another brought a truckload of tarps to protect people from the scorching sun. When Nina started an online gift registry for donations, her house soon overflowed with survival blankets, snack bars, and boxes of diapers.

Journalists from media outlets worldwide—including The New York Times, the BBC, and the Associated Press—reported on the humanitarian crisis and

the community response. The community helped show the world what a more humane response to migrants seeking safety and a better life could look like.

Meanwhile, AFSC staff and others documented how Border Patrol’s neglect endangered migrant lives. In numerous cases, agents failed to provide emergency medical attention when needed. Among these cases: A woman from Jamaica who had suffered a miscarriage and was hemorrhaging was not provided medical attention for days, despite advocates raising the issue multiple times. An infant who stopped taking breastmilk, started vomiting, and was listless was

**“I HONESTLY BELIEVE THE COLLECTIVE WORK WE DID SAVED LIVES.”**



AFSC staff organized four different stations that migrants could access through the fence. The stations provided food, water, medical attention, and cell phone charging. Photo(s): Pedro Rios/AFSC

only taken to a hospital after advocates’ intervention. A 79-year-old Colombian woman who fell off the border wall and suffered injuries to her leg only received medical attention after an entire day of phone calls from several advocates.

“I honestly believe the collective work we did saved lives,” Pedro says. In May of 2023, the Southern Border Communities

Coalition—which includes AFSC—filed a formal complaint with the Department of Homeland Security’s Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties. It was filled with testimonies and photos from AFSC and partners. Over 20 pages, the complaint detailed the many ways that Border Patrol was violating migrants’ rights and putting their lives at risk.

Soon after the complaint was filed, Border Patrol ended its practice of holding migrants in the open-air cell. Some migrants were detained and deported, while others were released in the U.S.

With the support of Universidad Popular, another human rights organization that supported migrants trapped between the border walls, AFSC staff conducted follow-up interviews with several people who were held at the site. We will publish a report on the findings by the end of 2023. This



is part of our commitment to advocate for policies that protect the lives and rights of all migrants, wherever they’re from.

“Even the tiny act of handing someone water through the fence serves as a counter-narrative to U.S. policies that deny people their fundamental rights,” Adriana says. “Our community was able to challenge the inhumanity of this terrible migration system—and welcome people with dignity and respect.” •



# Relief for refugees around the world

Throughout AFSC's history, we have assisted people forced to leave their homes because of conflict, natural disasters, and other crises.

Here are some ways we're making a difference today.



Delivering assistance to earthquake survivors in Harem, Turkey. Photo: Emre Çoban / İHH

## TURKEY AND SYRIA

### Delivering aid to earthquake survivors

After the devastating earthquakes in Turkey and Syria, AFSC and partners provided relief to thousands of people displaced from their homes, including Syrian refugees. We focused our efforts in areas where few relief organizations operate, providing survivors with water, food, and other emergency supplies.

Since the earthquakes struck in February 2023, we have delivered food packages to more than 4,100 people. We've also installed mobile latrines in camps for internally displaced people. And the mobile health clinic we funded provided more than 1,900 medical consultations, allowing people to see a midwife or a general doctor.

In addition, we worked with partners in Syria to install 30 solar energy kits, which have helped more than 3,500 people meet basic needs despite a lack of permanent shelter.

**“You are one of the few who stood by us in this disaster.”**

**– ISSA AHMED, A REFUGEE AT A CAMP IN IDLIB, SYRIA**



## UKRAINE CRISIS

### Assisting refugees displaced by war

In partnership with local Quaker groups and other organizations, AFSC is providing humanitarian aid and other support to Ukrainian refugees in Europe. We have directed funds to local organizations in several countries. These funds have been used to:

**Support families of people with disabilities.** In Poland, the nonprofit Patchwork is helping Ukrainian refugees access government disability benefits and other services. Patchwork also provides families with orthotic shoes, helps with accommodations, and more.

**Help refugees find temporary housing.** Migration Aid operates the largest transit refugee hostel in Hungary and has provided a safe haven to more than 33,000 Ukrainian refugees.

**Ensure people can meet basic needs.** In the Czech Republic, People in Need-SOS Ukraine helps refugees find housing and jobs as well as access to education and health care. In Ukraine, the Ukraine Women's Fund provides grants to help women's/feminist organizations meet urgent humanitarian needs. It also offers psychosocial support and transportation services.

**Promote peaceful alternatives to violence.** In Estonia, the Tallinn War Refugee Centre has hosted workshops on nonviolence and alternatives to military service for youth. The center also provides children with books to help them learn Estonian.



## GAZA

### Helping seniors living under blockade

For over 16 years, the more than 2 million Palestinians in Gaza have endured the effects of Israel's military blockade. The circumstances are especially harsh for elderly Palestinians. Many depend on their families for care. Unfortunately, their families often find themselves struggling with their own financial challenges.

This year, AFSC provided 300 elderly Palestinians in Gaza with resources including wheelchairs, walkers, mattresses, and adult diapers. These supplies are critical, especially for seniors whose homes were destroyed or damaged by Israeli airstrikes in May.

As we work to address the needs of Palestinian elders, we also show solidarity with them in advocating for systemic change—most importantly, an end to the blockade that deprives so many of the basic dignity they deserve.





## SOMALIA AND KENYA

### Helping people find healing, peace, and stability

Over the past two years, tens of thousands of refugees have arrived in Kenya's Dadaab refugee camps. More than 90% are from Somalia, where drought, famine, and ongoing conflict have made it hard for many to survive.

Since 2013, AFSC and local partners have worked in Dadaab. We provide trauma healing, facilitate dialogues, and help people build skills to resolve conflicts peacefully. This year, we launched a new project to assist refugees and residents along a major migration corridor, which includes the towns of Kismayu and Dhobley in Somalia and Dadaab in Kenya.

Through this initiative, people are receiving food, water, legal services, and other aid while in transit. Youth and other community members are learning about their rights and responsibilities, conflict resolution, and civic engagement. Counselors and social workers are trained in trauma healing so they can better assist community members. And local organizations have begun monitoring the humanitarian situation at the Somalia-Kenya border. This helps us better address critical needs and advocate for more humane migration policies.



Participants learn sewing skills to earn a sustainable income.  
PHOTO: AFSC/SOMALIA



Youth take part in a peacebuilding exercise.  
PHOTO: AFSC

## A REFUGEE'S PERSPECTIVE

### Leaving my home in Sudan

*After the start of the war in Sudan, hundreds of thousands of people fled to neighboring countries. AFSC and partners supported refugees arriving in Ethiopia and South Sudan, providing them with food, medicine, clothing, hygiene supplies, and covering immigration and travel expenses.*

*With support from AFSC, Enass Muzamel—a human rights defender—and her two sisters evacuated from Sudan to Ethiopia. Here Enass shares her story.*

#### ON ESCAPING KHARTOUM

I wasn't planning to leave Khartoum, but I didn't have a choice. One of the reasons we left our house in the beginning of the war was because our neighbor—who lives just four houses down the street—was cooking in her home, and she was killed. We saw that.

It took us nine days to reach Addis Ababa. My sisters and I moved from one city to another almost every day. We rented flats that would normally cost \$10 to \$15 USD a day, but because of the war and people taking advantage, rents were \$100 to \$150 USD a day.

We also traveled some very dangerous roads. AFSC arranged for a private driver to take us in a caravan to Ethiopia.

When we reached Ethiopia immigration, we were surprised that the cost of a visa was \$80, when it was just \$50 a few months ago. All these costs can be very difficult for refugees. Many have fled without anything. Many don't have access to their bank accounts because banks in Sudan have been destroyed.

#### ON RESETTLING IN ADDIS ABABA

It has not been easy. Everything is different from Sudan. Thanks to AFSC, it's been good. We stayed at a guesthouse in Addis Ababa of an AFSC staff member, then we moved to a flat. Now I'm applying to get a visa that will allow me to stay permanently.

We are also keeping busy with other initiatives, which helps me forget about my own problems. We are meeting with other groups in the

Photo: AFP via Getty Images



Salama Hub [a coalition supported by AFSC]. I'm still very involved in what's happening in Khartoum, working day and night and communicating with people there. I'm helping to reach out to pharmacies, resources for food and water, and helping people with temporary relocation.

#### ON THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN SUDAN

It's a humanitarian disaster in Sudan. The health sector is completely damaged—90% of hospitals are bombed. People don't have water, food, and electricity. People wait in line for hours just to get bread. But even though food is out there, you might be shot trying to get it.

The war is not a civil war. It is a war between two factions of the Sudanese military. The Sudanese people have nothing to do with this war except that they have to pay the price.

We want more international attention to what's happening. If this Sudanese war continues, this country will disappear. The neighboring countries in Africa and the Middle East will be affected by that. People need to do the right thing to help people.

It's also important to support human rights defenders. They are people on the front lines. When you help human rights defenders, you're helping tens of thousands more people because they do so much work for many others. •

*Thank you to everyone in the AFSC community who has donated to make these efforts and more possible!*

*If you would like to support AFSC's Refugee Response Fund, please visit*

**AFSC.ORG/GIVE2REFUGEE**



# OUR PATH TOWARD MIGRANT JUSTICE



Illustration: Aija Suuta

Around the globe, AFSC works for a future where all people have the power to determine where they live and opportunities to thrive. But today, our world is facing the largest displacement crisis since World War II. Over 108 million people have been forced from their homes because of war, poverty, climate-driven catastrophes, and other causes.

Earlier this year, global migration leaders from AFSC convened at the Ford Foundation in New York City. They talked with volunteers, supporters, and funders about the challenges we face and how we're working with communities worldwide to realize our vision.

Here are four objectives, established through our strategic plan, that guide all our migration work.

## ONE MAKE SYSTEMIC CHANGE TO IMPROVE LIVES.

**In many countries, governments treat migrants as threats to be managed or eliminated—instead of welcoming them with dignity and compassion.**

Restrictive policies force people to return to the dangerous conditions they fled. These policies also separate families and subject migrants to detention and abuse. AFSC works to support people in navigating those realities and shifting those policies.

### SPOTLIGHT

In New Jersey, AFSC provides free legal representation to 2,500 immigrants every year. We also organize and advocate alongside community members harmed by unjust policies. Together, we've achieved major milestones to end immigration detention in the state. Our

efforts have led to the closure of three immigration detention centers. We've also helped secure public funding for legal representation. This has been life-changing for immigrants facing detention and deportation who otherwise would not have the benefit of an attorney.

"It's important to engage in local, county, and state advocacy, especially when there is federal inaction," says Nicole Miller, associate regional director for AFSC's Northeast Region.

## TWO DEMILITARIZE BORDER COMMUNITIES.

**The United States and other countries continue to expand and militarize their borders. This practice has endangered lives, pushing people toward more treacherous migration routes.**

"Militarization along migratory routes is growing dramatically," says Luis Paz Bekker, regional director for AFSC's Latin America and the Caribbean region. "Now there are soldiers on every border—Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and it's expanding to Panama and even Colombia." In this environment, community organizing serves a vital role in creating greater transparency and accountability—and mitigating harm.

### SPOTLIGHT

In Tijuana, Mexico, AFSC joined with the coalition the 1597 Collective to stop local police from arbitrarily stopping and detaining migrants—and turning them into migration authorities for deportation. Our organizing, education, and advocacy efforts led to a judge's ruling to effectively end these practices. Since then, we've seen a significant decrease in the arrests and detention of migrants in Tijuana.

"These accomplishments represent small steps toward a more just and compassionate system," Luis says.

## THREE ENSURE MIGRANT RIGHTS ARE PROTECTED.

**Many migrants face threats to their rights, including in the communities where they resettle. AFSC supports efforts to oppose racism and create more welcoming communities.**

### SPOTLIGHT

In South Africa and Zimbabwe, violence against migrants has become more common in recent years. Community members are working to counter xenophobia and protect migrant rights, with support from AFSC. We're training migrants to know their rights and responsibilities. We're helping people develop conflict-resolution skills. And we're creating safe spaces to bring together migrants and the communities that host them, focusing on the cultural heritages they share instead of what divides them.

"By focusing on what unites us, we aim to break down barriers and foster acceptance and inclusivity," says AFSC Africa Regional Director Kennedy Akolo.



We do everything from the perspective of Quaker values.

—AMY GOTTLIEB, GLOBAL MIGRATION DIRECTOR

## FOUR SUPPORT MIGRANT-LED EFFORTS TO MAKE POSITIVE CHANGE.

**People who have been forcibly displaced are demonstrating great courage, even in the face of assaults on their lives and rights.**

They're resisting the victim narrative—and leading efforts to transform conditions during their journeys and in the communities where they resettle.

With help from our global community of supporters, AFSC brings vital resources to their efforts.

### SPOTLIGHT

In San Diego, California, AFSC's U.S.-Mexico Border Program collaborates with communities to develop neighborhood human rights committees.

These committees determine which actions to take, and AFSC works to ensure they have the tools and resources they need. That includes training community members so that they can monitor the presence of Border Patrol and ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) agents in their neighborhood and prevent family separations.

AFSC is "not there to empower people, because the power already exists within them," says Program Director Pedro Rios. "We accompany people so they recognize their own inherent power. They realize their neighbor has a similar experience, and they begin to collectivize that experience—and the leadership that is already within them."

Migration is caused by many interconnected challenges, including conflict, climate change, and economic injustice. Today, AFSC is working to address the root causes of migration, provide support to migrating people, and advocate for more just, humane migration policies.

"We do everything from the perspective of Quaker values," says Global Migration Director Amy Gottlieb. "What we're doing in Zimbabwe is very much connected to what we're doing in Guatemala, which is very connected to what we're doing at the U.S.-Mexico border and what we're doing in New Jersey."

Together, through collective action and a commitment to justice and compassion, we can create a world where migration is no longer a source of suffering but a beacon of hope and opportunity. •



In Greensboro, North Carolina, AFSC staff, partners, and community members protested the opening of a migrant child detention center. Photo: E Henderson



# CREATING AN APARTHEID-FREE WORLD



Faith groups across the U.S. are pledging to cut ties to Israeli apartheid and oppose racism in all its forms.

BY JENNIFER BING

Last spring, I visited Israel and Palestine with a faith delegation hosted by AFSC. We met with Palestinian organizers and other community members who showed us how the Israeli occupation affects their everyday lives.

We visited Um El Kheir, a Palestinian Bedouin village in the West Bank. It's one of the many Palestinian communities where the Israeli government has conducted army raids, demolished homes, and confiscated land. Community members have also faced attacks on their livestock and harassment from their Israeli neighbors, who began settling in the area in 1982.

Like many Palestinian villages, Um El Kheir has no access to the water, electricity, and other basic services the Israeli government provides to Israeli settlements. As we talked with a community member, he pointed to the streetlights that illuminated a hillside just above his village. Those lights surrounded an industrial chicken farm in the Israeli settlement of Carmel.

"Even their chickens live a better life than we do," he remarked.

Awdah, an English teacher in Um El Kheir, told us: "We just want simple rights. We just want to be safe in our homes—with electricity, water, and a place to graze our sheep."

## A SYSTEM OF APARTHEID

For decades, the Palestinian people have faced Israeli occupation and systematic human rights abuses that constitute apartheid. Apartheid is defined as a legally enforced system of separation and oppression based on race, creed, or ethnicity that has resulted in human rights violations.

Our delegation witnessed apartheid in Um El Kheir and many Palestinian communities we visited. Throughout the West Bank, we saw how a system of control and separation—enforced by walls, checkpoints, military laws, and expanding Israeli settlement colonies—denies Palestinians equality, freedom, and the "simple rights" Awdah describes.



An AFSC delegation to Palestine in the spring of 2023. Photo: Chad Collins

In Gaza, Palestinians are isolated from the world due to Israel's military occupation and blockade. Gaza's 2 million residents lack adequate access to power, clean water, and health care. They face severe restrictions on their ability to travel to the rest

**APARTHEID IS DEFINED AS A LEGALLY ENFORCED SYSTEM OF SEPARATION AND OPPRESSION BASED ON RACE, CREED, OR ETHNICITY THAT HAS RESULTED IN HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS.**

of Palestine or the outside world. They're limited in what they can export and import. As a result, Gaza's economy is

collapsing, and over 80% of the population relies on international assistance to survive. Apartheid also exists inside Israel for Palestinians who face discrimination due to their status as non-Jews. It limits where they can live, work, and access public services. Under Israel's "nation-state law," passed in 2018, "the right to exercise national self-determination" in Israel "is unique to the Jewish people."

Palestinian human rights groups have described Israel's policies as apartheid for decades. But in the past few years, much of the international human rights community has agreed and called for an end to Israeli apartheid. These groups include Israeli and international human rights organizations Yesh Din, B'tselem, Human Rights Watch, and Amnesty International.

## A NEW CAMPAIGN TO END APARTHEID

Across North America, more people, congregations, schools, and organizations have recognized that Israeli apartheid prevents people from living in equality with dignity and respect. They are committed to doing something to stop it.

That's why AFSC and a coalition of



religious and secular organizations have launched a new initiative, Apartheid-Free Communities. Inspired by the movement that toppled apartheid in South Africa, we're urging people of faith and all communities of conscience to pledge to cut ties with Israeli apartheid. As of this writing, more than 150 groups have already signed on.

Each community that signs the pledge commits to resisting apartheid and all forms of racism and discrimination. This work can include educating ourselves about Israeli apartheid and raising community awareness. It can involve joining others in political advocacy and urging the U.S. government to withdraw its support of apartheid. If communities have investments, they can ensure they're not funding

companies involved in apartheid.

Burlington Monthly Meeting of Friends in Vermont signed the pledge. Now they're collecting signatures to petition their City Council to make Burlington an apartheid-free city.

Anita, a member of Burlington Friends, emailed me soon after they began collecting signatures. "I just left the farmers market, and the response was stunning," she wrote. "We collected at least 200 signatures. We had to add lines on the backs of the petition copies we had, and people waited in line to sign. We weren't prepared for such a response, so next time, we'll have more clipboards and copies of the petition."

Anita, who's a longtime advocate for Palestinian rights, reflected, "It's an amazing change in the political climate."

We're eager to help build more grassroots activism around the country. We want to reach more of our friends and neighbors and share with them why we must work to give hope to communities like Um El Kheir who seek equal rights and a dignified future for their children and families.

Together, we can build an apartheid-free world, starting with our own communities: our faith congregations, cities, campuses, and workplaces. •

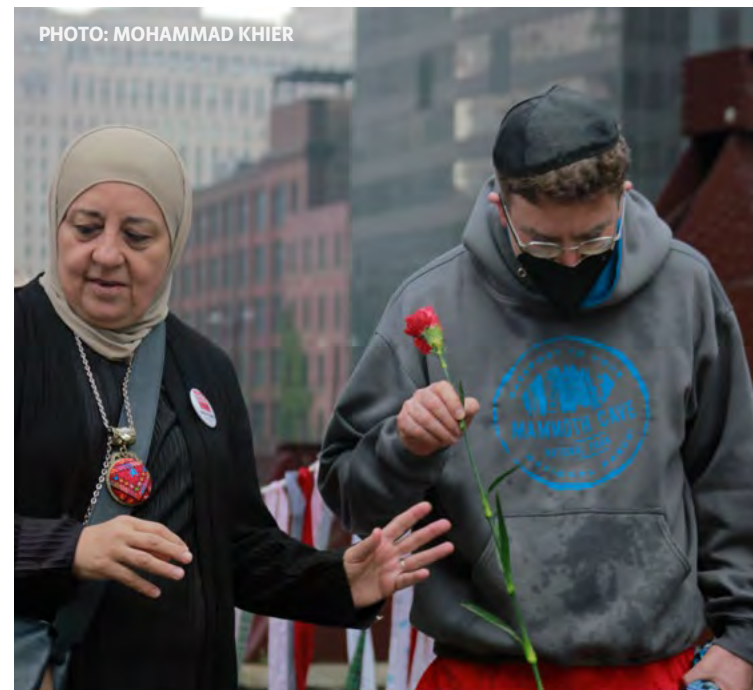
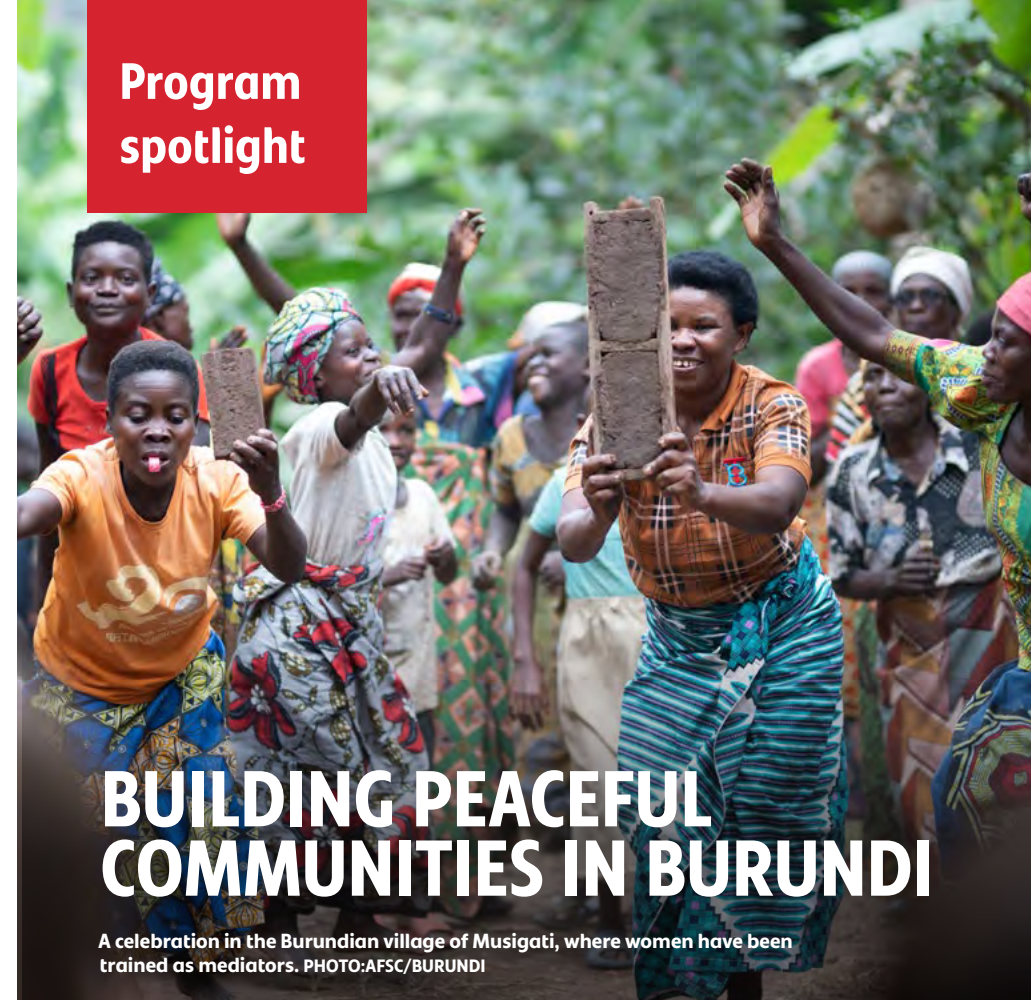


PHOTO: MOHAMMAD KHIER

## WILL YOU JOIN OUR EFFORTS TO BE APARTHEID-FREE?

Find resources to support your activism, including educational materials, posters, videos, resolutions passed by faith communities, and more.

**LEARN MORE**  
**APARTHEID-FREE.ORG**



**Program spotlight**

## BUILDING PEACEFUL COMMUNITIES IN BURUNDI

A celebration in the Burundian village of Musigati, where women have been trained as mediators. PHOTO:AFSC/BURUNDI

War and conflict have inordinate impacts on women and girls. At the same time, women play crucial roles in preventing and resolving conflict—and achieving peace and stability in their communities.

Today, more than 3,825 women in seven provinces of Burundi have been trained as mediators, with support from AFSC and local partners. In just the past two years, they have helped community members address thousands of conflicts, some of which stem from a history of cyclical armed conflicts in the region. The issues they have addressed include domestic violence, land disputes, and tensions that arise when former community members return after months or years away.

As part of the project, thousands of people have taken part in trauma healing sessions, received psychosocial support, and

**More than 3,825 women have been trained as mediators.**

participated in community dialogues. They have developed small group enterprises, such as making clay bricks, to generate income and strengthen community cohesion. Now community members can afford clothing, medical care, and other basic needs for their families and communities.

Speciose Nshimirimana, a community member in the village of Musigati in the Bubanza province, is proud of how far her community has come. "We are building a legacy for this community. In a few years, we will be even stronger than we are today."

**Find more events and actions at [afsc.org/getinvolved](https://afsc.org/getinvolved)**

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**AFSC Archives**

Our archives in Philadelphia hold AFSC's records from over a century of work on peace and justice. They offer a unique perspective on the social, political, and economic movements of our time. Now, you can access many of our archival videos, photos, reports, letters, and other documents online.

**[AFSC.ORG/ARCHIVES](https://afsc.org/archives)**



**TAKE THE PLEDGE**

**Think Twice Before Calling the Police**

Across the U.S., communities are organizing to create a future where we rely less on police—and ensure community safety for all. One way we can all help is to think twice before calling the police. Sign our pledge and learn more about alternatives that build real community safety.

**[AFSC.ORG/THINKTWICE](https://afsc.org/thinktwice)**







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## Quaker Action

Fall 2023 Volume 104 Number 2

**MATCHING GIFT OPPORTUNITY! NOVEMBER 28**



# Your generosity goes the distance

This **Giving Tuesday**, all gifts to AFSC will help us unlock a \$50,000 match to our Refugee Response Fund.

This season, your gift can go even further to support refugees, immigrants, and internally displaced people.

Visit [afsc.org/GivingTuesday](https://afsc.org/GivingTuesday) on **Nov. 28** to take part in this match!

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