

1 CALL PERMANENT CEASE-FIRE!

Groups and individuals across the United States and the world, including the American Friends Service Committee, are calling for an immediate and permanent cease-fire. Popular opinion polls also consistently show a majority of people in the U.S. are in favor of halting weapons sales to Israel. As a Quaker organization, AFSC opposes all violence and works toward its end. We know that violence will not end through more violence. To bring change, we must address the roots of conflict, including historic and ongoing displacement of Palestinians, occupation, and the reality of apartheid.

FIND MORE:

[AFSC.ORG/COMMIT-PALESTINE](https://afsc.org/commit-palestine)



WORKING BEYOND A CEASE-FIRE

Violence did not begin on October 7th, nor will a permanent cease-fire end all violence. AFSC will continue to work for the changes needed to end violence and build a just and lasting peace. This includes working to dismantle the root causes of harm, including the four listed below, which come together to create a system of violence.

APARTHEID

Inside Israel, Palestinians live under laws that limit their basic rights including where they can buy a home, what they can say, and who they can marry, limits not imposed on Jewish Israeli citizens. Leading human rights organizations including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and B'Tselem have described the situation as apartheid.

BLOCKADE

For 17 years, the people of Gaza have lived under an Israeli-imposed blockade that severely limits travel, trade, and everyday life. Since October 7th, so few trucks of aid and everyday items have been let through, that Palestinians in the north and south of Gaza are starving to death.

OCCUPATION

Israel's military occupation has entrenched a deeply abusive system of inequality and injustice that denies Palestinians their basic rights. This system of injustice is ongoing, and includes checkpoints, permits, military detention, and many other abuses.

SETTLER COLONIALISM

Academic Patrick Wolfe explains, "settler colonialism destroys to replace." Under settler colonialism, Palestinians face abuses including forced evictions, forcible transfers, and home demolitions. Israel's policy of constructing and expanding illegal settlements on occupied Palestinian land increases the number of human rights violations resulting from the occupation.



ECONOMIC ACTION

At AFSC, we continue to view economic activism actions as appeals to conscience, actions that seek to raise awareness of those engaged or complicit in harmful practices. It is our belief that economic activism helps keep us accountable to our values and, when rightly ordered, serves to affirm our common humanity. We also believe that boycott, divestment, and sanctions tactics, when used strategically, are effective nonviolent tools for realizing political and social change.

Divestment is action that can be taken on both a personal and an organizational level. Good targets for divestment campaigns are companies which you believe will change their actions after public pressure. Boycott campaigns are another form of economic activism. You can learn more about AFSC's divestment work, including a divestment list, tips on economic research, weekly BDS Office Hours, and a list of divestment wins at afsc.org/divest

SUPPORT ISRAELI REFUSERS

Since 2003, the Refuser Solidarity Network has supported over a thousand individuals who have publicly refused to become part of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories. The Network has supported refusers serving sentences, elevated stories of refusers through social media, led press and email campaigns, and built education programs for audiences around the world highlighting the importance of resistance to the occupation.

After October 7th, they started a project called "Voices Against War," designed to amplify and spread the voices of Israelis who oppose the war in Gaza and call for a cease-fire. According to the Network, the project is based on the belief that "in such difficult times where hopelessness and isolation prevail, it is important to strengthen the network of anti-war solidarity activists and share with the world that there are Israelis who are acting against the war." The project includes videos showing anti-war activists who demand a cease-fire which can be found on the social media channels of the Refuser Solidarity Network. Find more at refuser.org



2 WAYS TO DIVEST FROM MILITARISM

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3 WAYS TO TELL YOUR STORY

Storytelling skills are useful for having a successful lobby visit, captivating a Congressional staffer on a phone call, or having a hard conversation with friends or family. These tips are adapted from FCNL's guide on advocacy stories.

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TURNING POINT

Using a turning point story can be useful if you hope that your intended audience will change their mind or decide to act boldly in a way that mimics your transformation. You're connecting to a person by saying "you can learn and change like I did." These stories are powerful because they serve as examples.

EXAMPLE:

*For a long time I didn't understand the realities of daily life in Gaza, but then I read the anthology *Light in Gaza* and learned about travel restrictions and the physical and intellectual blockade. Now I see the full extent of what it means to try and live under Israeli blockade. Will you join me in calling for a cease-fire?*



MORAL VALUE

Moral value stories are powerful if you believe strongly in justice because of a religious or spiritual conviction. Moral value stories allow one to connect on a personal level that can transcend politics or the way an issue has been politicized. These stories are powerful because they get to your motivation.

EXAMPLE:

As a Quaker, I believe in the inherent worth and dignity of every human being. For me, a cease-fire is about more than policy, it's about choosing to move away from deadly violence as a way to make change and toward a world where we truly value human life. My faith leads me to call for a cease-fire. How does your faith lead you to act?



PERSONAL IMPACT

Personal impact stories are useful if you have experienced or witnessed occupation or apartheid first-hand. They share your participation in the issue or how you've been directly affected. These stories are powerful because they show how your life has been changed by the target policy.

EXAMPLE:

When I visited the occupied West Bank I saw firsthand the impact of restrictions like checkpoints and settler-only roads. The U.S. is complicit in the enforcement of these violent systems. Will you call for open access for humanitarian aid for the people of Gaza who also bear the brunt of these unjust restrictions?



GATHER SUPPLIES

- 20x30 inch black foamcore boards, one for each letter
- LED lights, one package for each letter
- batteries for LED lights
- screwdriver or electric drill
- duct tape



PLAN THE MESSAGE

Determine the number of letters in your message. Be sure you have the people power to have one person holding each sign for your action. Etch out one letter per board in pencil.



PUNCH HOLES

Mark along the letter where you will punch holes for the lights. Using a screwdriver or electric drill, punch a hole through completely. Be sure the hole isn't so big that the light will fall through. It should fit securely.



SECURE LIGHTS

Start from the top of the letter, insert a light into each hole and use duct tape to secure the string to the back. Secure the battery pack to the bottom so that you can easily access the on/off button.

4 STEPS TO MAKE VISUALLY STUNNING MESSAGES

FIND MORE: [AFSC.ORG/COMMIT-PALESTINE](https://www.afsc.org/commit-palestine)



5 TIPS FOR COMPELLING LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FIND MORE: [AFSC.ORG/COMMIT-PALESTINE](https://afsc.org/commit-palestine)



DRAW THE READER IN

Your first sentence is important! With so much media coverage of what's happening, most of which doesn't get to the root issues or highlight the real impact of violence on Palestinians in Gaza, you really want to draw your reader in. You can use humor or start with something controversial or shocking.



USE "I" STATEMENTS

"I" statements help to differentiate what you're writing from a regurgitation of the news. Ex. "I see," "I feel," "I think," and "I believe." Folks read the letters to the editor section to help them understand what their constituents and fellow community members care about and how they feel about different issues.



SEND IT IN!

The most important thing you can do to improve the likelihood that your letter is published, is to explicitly refer to a recent news article. If your paper is published daily, the article you pick should be no more than a few days old. If your paper is published weekly, respond to an article in the last issue. Make sure you know the guidelines for your specific newspaper so you don't get rejected based on formatting.

BE SPECIFIC

You'll likely only have around 200 words, so each one you choose is important. Don't use space quoting a long phrase or describing everything in detail. Though facts and statistics can be an important part of compellingly illustrating your point, because letters to the editor are so short, use them sparingly. Ensure your letter makes a specific ask to specific policymakers. If you mention your intended audience by name, the chances are higher that they or their staff will see it.



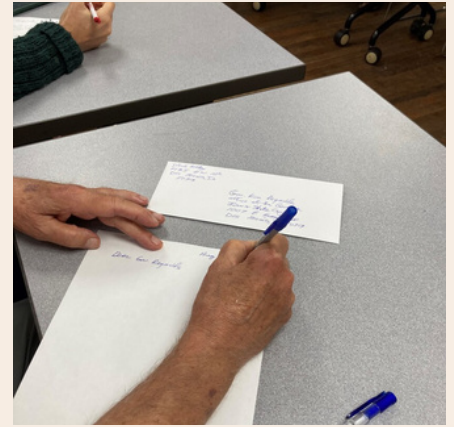
WHY YOU?

Think about why you are writing this letter. What makes this letter different coming from you? What does being a constituent mean to you? How do you believe our government should work? What role do you play in your community? Referencing the answers to these questions in your letter can help you connect with your audience and draw on the power of your community.



5 TIPS FOR HOSTING A LETTER-WRITING PARTY

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1 GOALS AND TARGETS

Before writing a letter or asking others to do so, consider your goal. What do you want to change? Your goal could be big or small, but it should help determine the content of your letter. Pick a target who holds power to help you accomplish your goal. Who might you be able to influence? You can write to elected officials (local, statewide, or national), media corporations, community leaders, businesses, or anyone else with decision-making power. Make sure you have an address for your target!

2 WHY WRITE LETTERS?

When targeting an elected official, letters and phone calls are typically considered more influential than emails. Mass emails demonstrate widespread support for a cause, but phone calls and hand-written letters demonstrate dedication to a cause. Though letters are not as efficient for urgent asks, for targets with no phone number or full voicemail boxes, letters can sometimes be the only way to communicate. Letters also physically manifest your concerns, making them harder to ignore. Politicians in D.C. often display letters from their constituents on their walls.

4 CREATE COMMUNITY

Taking frequent action, but observing few results can be incredibly frustrating. It can be rejuvenating to surround yourself with people who understand the way you're feeling and take action together. Decide where you would like to host your letter-writing party (your home, a bookstore, community center, or library) and invite your friends! Gather the supplies you might need, e.g., paper, envelopes, stamps, pens, stickers, and tape. If you're hosting your event in a public place, ensure you have permission to do so. Do you want to play music? Will you serve any food?

3 CONTENT

Begin your letter with a short personal introduction, the kind you might use with a new friend. Mention your constituency if applicable. To build goodwill, begin your letter by thanking your target for a recent action they've taken. Connect your goal into every aspect of your letter. How can you convince your target to take action toward your goal? You can use storytelling techniques from our "3 Ways to Tell Your Story" guide. If you're writing to the media, consider repurposing your letter using our "5 Tips For Compelling Letters to the Editor" guide.

5 SEND YOUR LETTER

By decorating your letter and envelope, you can increase your chances that your letter is given the attention it deserves. Think about the kinds of letters you might display on your fridge. Can you include a photo of your dog or cat? Draw a picture on the envelope? Make sure that you have the address correct, that you've included a return address, and that you have the correct amount of postage. For targets who might take security measures with their mail, sending a postcard instead of a letter can help avoid delays.

6 TIPS FOR ORGANIZING EFFECTIVE FUNDRAISERS

FIND MORE: [AFSC.ORG/COMMIT-PALESTINE](https://afsc.org/commit-palestine)



1 CHOOSE A GOAL Decide where to send your proceeds, how much you want to raise, and how you'll transfer the money. Share a specific monetary goal and regular updates to keep your audience engaged and measure your success. Reach out to local businesses or supporters for matching donations to double your impact. Before you begin, make sure you have the capacity and time to plan your event! Recruit dedicated volunteers early to help distribute the workload.

2 PLAN THE LOGISTICS Provide multiple ways to donate (ex. cash, online payment platforms, and mobile payment apps). If you're wiring money directly to a family in Gaza, try to stay in contact in case their situation changes. Have a backup plan if the wire transfer is rejected. If you aren't in touch with any Palestinians in Gaza, you can find a family to help sponsor at linktr.ee/opolivebranch.

3 SECURE A VENUE For in-person events, ticket sales, vendor sales, and suggested donations can help you meet your fundraising goal. Raffles, interactive games, and ticketed movie screenings work well for online events. Online events help involve people outside your area or disabled people. If your event is in-person, be sure to get specific permission to host a fundraiser in your venue. Prepare a plan for unforeseen circumstances to help minimize disruptions.

4 MAKE A RUN OF SHOW Are there those in your community skilled at art, dance, crafts, music, games, etc. who can lend their talents? Use your current skills to your advantage. Make sure to include educational content so attendees can learn more about Palestine. You could give out informational materials to help continue to engage your audience after your event. If your event is in-person, consider asking a local Arab restaurant to cater.

5 ADVERTISE WELL A striking flyer can help you attract attendees and lend credibility to your event. Check out Flyers for Falastin and the Palestine Poster Project for inspiration. Think about your intended audience and advertise strategically. You could post your flyer on social media, wheatpaste it around town, or post your flyer in community spaces. Ask allied groups to share your flyer or collaborate on a social media post.

6 KEEP GOOD RECORDS Plan a detailed budget for your event even if you're aiming for free resources. Include expenses for materials, marketing, and potential venue costs. Maintain an itemized list of all event spending. Track all donations, including how they were sent and to whom. Inform your audience clearly about where their funds will go and share receipt of the donations to prevent any discrepancies.

6 WAYS TO SUPPORT PALESTINIANS IN GAZA

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1

CONTACT YOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Popular opinion polls show a majority of people in the U.S. want President Biden to halt weapons shipments to Israel. But fewer than 100 Members of Congress have even called for a cease-fire. Our elected officials must keep hearing from us.

2

BRING ATTENTION TO WHAT IS HAPPENING IN GAZA

Take part in protests. Marches, rallies, and vigils are a powerful way to publicly demonstrate solidarity with Gaza. To make your message loud and clear, download and print our free posters for Palestine. You can find these posters at afsc.org/actionhour

3

WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

This is an effective way to show support for Gaza, counter harmful media narratives about what's happening, and add context that news outlets often miss. Find a guide to writing letters to the editor with five helpful tips at afsc.org/actionhour

4

LEARN MORE ABOUT GAZA

Read *Light in Gaza: Writings Born of Fire*. This anthology features work by twelve Palestinian writers who imagine the future of Gaza beyond the cruelties of occupation and apartheid. You can download the e-book for free on the Haymarket Books website.

5

JOIN US IN DISMANTLING APARTHEID

In 2023, AFSC and partners launched the Apartheid-Free Communities initiative. Over 390 communities, groups, and organizations have pledged to join others in working to end all support to Israel's apartheid regime. Visit apartheid-free.org to get involved.

6

MAKE A FINANCIAL GIFT

Donate to support AFSC's emergency relief in Gaza. Your donation will bring humanitarian relief and support efforts to stop the violence and build the conditions for peace.



7 CHANTS FOR A CEASE-FIRE

We've gathered this list of chants heard at cease-fire protests. Feel free to use or adapt this list for your own events. Call and response chants have a long and powerful history as part of protests and vigils. Chants help clarify why a group has gathered and convey their message or demands. They can also help energize and unite a crowd.

When you've planned to use chants as a part of your program, bring a megaphone or microphone so that the person leading the chants can be heard. If possible, have at least two people willing to lead chants so that nobody gets too tired. Silence can also be a powerful tool at protests. In planning your event, consider how you could engage attendees in silence and sound.

Remember that as an attendee you don't have to repeat every chant used at a protest. Make a personal decision.

LEARN MORE: [AFSC.ORG/CRISIS-GAZA](https://www.afsc.org/crisis-gaza)

1

Call: What do we want?
Response: Cease-fire!
Call: When do we want it?
Response: Now!

2

Not another penny,
Not another dollar,
We won't pay for Gaza's slaughter!

3

Not another nickel,
Not another dime,
We won't pay for Israel's crimes!
(Bombing children is a crime!)

4

Call: One Response: We won't be silent
Call: Two Response: Our voices matter
Call: Three Response: We take a stand
Call: Four Response: Justice and freedom

5

From the river to the sea,
Freedom and equality

6

Hey [legislator's name],
You can't hide,
Stop funding genocide!

7

The people,
United,
Will never be defeated!



8 STEPS TO HOLD A POWERFUL VIGIL



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1

MAKE A PLAN Clarify within your group your purpose and intended audience. Try and choose a highly visible location – both to the media and to your intended audience. Select a time at sunset or after dark so that any lighted signs or candles will make a visual impact. Check if permits or permissions are required for your chosen location.

2

CHOOSE YOUR VISUAL Think of your ideal visual impact. You could provide candles for people to hold or place in a shape. You could surround signs with the numbers of people killed or wounded with flowers. Make your plan with your chosen location (including where people will stand) in mind. Ask your community what supplies could be donated.

3

GET YOUR MESSAGE OUT Create a promotional graphic for social media and distribution within the community. Include the location, date, and time of the event. Tell people what they should bring.

4

PLAN A DIVERSE PROGRAM Plan a program that includes speeches, readings, prayers, poetry, and/or music. Invite speakers who can share stories about Gaza. Arrange for audio equipment if needed.

5

KEEP FOLKS SAFE Ensure the safety of participants by inviting a de-escalation team. Plan for emergency first-aid.

6

ATTRACT MEDIA ATTENTION Choose a media spokesperson responsible for getting in touch with the media, sharing a press release, and alerting media contacts on the day of the vigil. They should be comfortable conveying the message and tone of the vigil.

7

TAKE PHOTOS During the vigil, choose somebody to take and post photos to social media. If no professional media attend, share photos and a press release with media contacts after the vigil.

8

CALL FOLKS TO ACTION End your vigil with a call to action. Ask your attendees to call Congress and demand an arms embargo, attend a future event you are planning, or donate to a humanitarian relief effort.





9 TIPS FOR CALLING YOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Calling the offices of your members of Congress is one of many ways to make your views known. Though it might feel like you are participating in a hopeless and impersonal numbers game, staffers and members take personal calls seriously, and regard them as a good way to gauge the opinions of their district.

LEARN MORE: [AFSC.ORG/CRISIS-GAZA](https://afsc.org/crisis-gaza)



IDENTIFY YOURSELF

Congressional offices consider the perspectives of constituents when making policy and legislative decisions. If you are a constituent, tell the staffer. You'll likely then be asked for your street address and email. You can also call the offices of members of Congress besides your own to thank them for taking action. On these calls, you can indicate you are a supporter.

GIVE YOUR TOP ASK

This is the most important part of your call! Don't be afraid to repeat your ask often throughout your call.

KEEP IT SHORT

Staffers receive calls all day. The goal of frequent calling is to impress staffers with the volume of calls in support of Palestinian human rights, but we do want staffers to listen to our calls!

LEAD WITH PASSION

Your story is what makes your call stand out amidst the many calls staffers get every day. Use AFSC's storytelling tips to personalize and add urgency.

CALL AND EMAIL EACH DAY

One call shows you care. But frequent communication demonstrates commitment and urgency and builds trust.

CALL BOTH OFFICES

Calling both the capitol and district offices allows you to reach more staff and increases the chances you speak to a friendly staffer.

SAVE THE NUMBERS

Saving both the district and the national office phone numbers in your phone makes them easier to access for daily calls.

THANK THE STAFFER

You are talking to someone likely also upset about deadly violence. Ask them how they are doing and listen to the answer.

USE YOUR COMMUNITY

Phone calls help an office get a sense of constituent views on their political and legislative actions. Mention if your community shares your view to give your statement more weight.





10 TIPS FOR TOWN HALL MEETINGS

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GO WITH A FRIEND

It can be hard to speak in a hostile crowd, so go with friends and divide up roles. At least one person should ask a question and one other person should record your interaction. Keep your cell phone or camera fully charged!



PRACTICE

You can read from a card or your phone, but making eye contact is often more effective. Your audience includes the candidate AND the people around you.



DON'T ASSUME

Imagine your audience has very little background knowledge. Don't lecture. Make clear what you want the candidate to do. If a candidate says, "I'll look at that and get back to you," follow-up!



BRING A PROP

Aim to make a lasting impression on your audience, like in theater. Bring something to represent your issue. Ex. Hold a water bottle and say, "This is not getting into Gaza due to our country's policies. How can you help?"



SIT STRATEGICALLY

Arrive early and sit close to the candidate or public microphones. If possible, spread supporters out across the room. To show strength in numbers, wear a distinctive item.



SMILE

It could be hard, but while the candidate is speaking, smile and stare adoringly. Candidates pick up on body language and will pick folks they think support their positions.



ASK STRONG QUESTIONS

If questions are taken on cards, write different questions with different colored pens to increase your chances. For live questions, relate your question to a previous topic. Ex. "Like the last speaker, I am concerned about how our tax money is used. I don't want my taxes spent to kill Palestinians."



BE ACTIVE

Clapping for one another's questions shows the candidate that your message has broad support. Passing out information helps the audience learn and could grow your support.



DON'T GIVE UP

If your question wasn't asked, find the candidate after and shake their hand. Don't let go of their hand until you have asked your question. Get a friend to film!



DEBRIEF

Evaluate what went well and what you might do differently. Post your experience on social media. Follow up with the candidate, whether or not you got the answer you wanted. You are building a relationship – even if it isn't always friendly.

11 TIPS TO BE A GOOD BYSTANDER



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Make your presence as a witness known. If possible, make eye contact with the person being harassed and ask them if they want support. If you feel safe doing so, create distance or a barrier between the person being harassed and the harasser.



Take cues from the person being harassed. Are they engaging with the harasser or not? You can make suggestions like “Would you like to walk with me over here?” and follow their lead. Notice if the person being harassed is resisting in their own way, and honor that.



Keep both of you safe. Assess your surroundings—are there others nearby you can pull in to support? Working in a team is a good idea if it is possible. Can you and the person being harassed move to a safer space or place?



Don't call the police. For many communities experiencing harassment right now (including Arab and Muslim communities, Black people, queer and trans folks, and immigrants), the police could cause a greater danger than the harasser.



De-escalate the situation as best you can. The goal is to get the person being harassed to safety, not to incite further violence. Follow up with the person being harassed after the incident is over, see if they need anything else.



Take the initiative to intervene. Silence is dangerous-it signals approval and leaves the person being harassed alone. If you are nervous or afraid to speak out, move closer to the person being harassed to communicate your support with your body.



Use distraction as a subtle and creative way to intervene. Distract either the harasser or the person being harassed with conversation unrelated to the harassment to derail and de-escalate the situation.



Bring in other people around you to help de-escalate. Make eye contact with witnesses and encourage them to intervene.



If you feel it is safe to do so, respond directly to the harasser by communicating that you will not tolerate harassment of others. Be confident, assertive, and calm.



If you cannot intervene in the moment, check in with the person who was harassed afterwards to see if you can do anything to support them, illustrating that they are not alone.



Share these tips so we can all collectively keep each other safe.

12 PALESTINIAN JOURNALISTS TO FOLLOW

Journalists in Gaza risk their lives to bring the world news of life and death in Gaza. Consuming news from Palestinian journalists can help you to stay informed.

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) reports that between October 7, 2023 and July 3, 2024, 108 journalists and media workers have been killed. The President of CPJ stated that this period “has been the deadliest conflict for journalists that CPJ has ever recorded.”

LEARN MORE: [AFSC.ORG/CRISIS-GAZA](https://www.afsc.org/crisis-gaza)



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