

The Honorable Samantha Power
U.S. Agency for International Development
Ronald Reagan Building
Washington, D.C. 20523

October 9, 2024

Dear Administrator Power:

I write to raise grave concerns about the likely misuse of more than one billion dollars in U.S. humanitarian aid sent to Gaza since October 2023. As I predicted would happen from the outset, credible reporting indicates that Hamas terrorists have diverted this aid; indisputable evidence demonstrates that the aid was always at high risk of diversion. In all likelihood, the Biden-Harris administration has prolonged the Gaza war, allowed aid to flow to Israel's enemies, and misused taxpayer funds.

On September 30, your agency announced approximately \$336 million in additional humanitarian funding for Gaza, Judea, and Samaria. On the same day, the United Nations acknowledged that Fateh al-Sharif, a Hamas leader in Lebanon killed in an Israeli airstrike, was employed by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency. UNRWA, a major USAID partner before October 7, remains a chief conduit for UN humanitarian assistance in Gaza despite extensive evidence of its ties to Hamas.

While Congress cut off funding to UNRWA earlier this year, USAID continues to work with UN agencies and other local partners in Gaza despite documented concerns about inadequate vetting and possible terrorist ties. In July, the USAID Inspector General identified multiple "shortcomings and vulnerabilities in its overnight mechanisms" for Gaza aid, such as inadequate vetting of local partners, reliance on self-reporting of terrorist ties from partners, reliance on inadequate vetting by UN partners, and challenges with third-party monitoring.

These flawed "oversight mechanisms" are the very procedures that led USAID to ignore or tolerate UNRWA employees who belonged to Hamas. As nothing has changed, how should the Congress trust that any aid sent to Gaza will not end up in the hands of Hamas?

When American aid flows to Israel's enemies—who are also our enemies—USAID is guilty of moral failure, strategic catastrophe, and betrayal of the American taxpayer. You should immediately suspend all aid until taking credible and serious steps to stop Americans' tax dollars from funding terrorists.

Sincerely,



Tom Cotton
United States Senator