



United States Department of State

*Washington, D.C. 20520*

May 15, 2024

The Honorable  
Joni Ernst  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Ernst:

Thank you for your May 1 letter to President Biden regarding a CBS news report that the Biden-Harris Administration is considering its options for admitting Palestinians as refugees to the United States. The White House has asked the Department of State to respond on the President's behalf.

We appreciate your interest and value the opportunity to further explain what the Administration is doing to help vulnerable Palestinians with ties to the United States seek safety outside of Gaza.

The United States has provided support for over 1,800 eligible individuals from Gaza who have departed or want to depart. This includes U.S. citizens, lawful permanent residents (LPRs), and their families, many of whom have come to the United States. This also includes particularly vulnerable individuals such as children with serious health conditions including cancer and physical disabilities who require acute or specialized care in the United States or in the region.

Any individuals from Gaza who have traveled or would travel to the United States are thoroughly vetted, as the safety and security of the American people is our top priority.

We have also been clear and consistent: the United States categorically rejects any actions leading to the forced relocation of Palestinians from Gaza

or the West Bank, a reduction in the territory of Gaza, or the redrawing of the borders of Gaza.

We appreciate your interest in this matter as well as your support for Afghans and other groups looking for assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Naz Durakoğlu". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "N" and "D".

Naz Durakoğlu  
Assistant Secretary  
Bureau of Legislative Affairs