



Blessed are the Peacemakers - Asking the Australian Government to fund peace-building in the Israeli – Palestinian conflict

February 2026

*Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.*

Matthew 5:7-9

The Palestinian and Jewish Israeli peace movement, mainly through the Alliance for Middle East Peace (ALLMEP), has called on governments worldwide to finance an International Peace Fund for Israel and Palestine, dedicated to empowering and scaling civil society efforts to build support for a just and lasting resolution to the conflict.



ALLMEP leads a growing network of over 180 civil society organisations, with hundreds of thousands of Palestinians and Israelis living and working in the region. Their work advances cooperation, trust, justice, equality, mutual understanding, and peace within and between these communities. Internationally, they amplify the voices of Israeli and Palestinian peacebuilders, increasing their profile and raising support for their work. In Israel and Palestine, they raise the capacity and collective impact of their member organisations. Their mission is to secure self-determination for all and to build a sustainable peace in the region.

On 8 December 2025, the UK Government announced that it would host a conference of Palestinian and Israeli civil society leaders on 12 March 2026 to focus on delivering a sustainable peace and mapping existing peace-building work. The conference will support the establishment of an International Peace Fund for Israel and Palestine.

The International Peace Fund for Israel and Palestine will be modelled on the International Fund for Ireland, which helped bring about lasting peace in Northern Ireland. The Australian Government made a \$7 million contribution to the International Fund for Ireland in 1994.

The International Peace Fund, if adequately resourced by international donors, would be able to provide robust, long-term support for civil society initiatives that promote relationship-building, shift public attitudes and catalyse the societal change that political agreements alone cannot deliver.

In what attempts to be one of the more objective analyses of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, “The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: What everyone needs to know” (2019), Professor Dov Waxman points out how the lack of resourcing for meaningful peace-building is a significant contributing factor to being unable to reach an end to the armed conflict, from which a fairer and lasting peace might be built. In discussing the failure of the Oslo peace process, he wrote (p. 132):

Most Israelis and Palestinians continued to perceive each other as enemies, to suspect each other's intentions, to think of themselves as the sole victims of the conflict, and to view their relationships in zero-sum terms. This was hardly surprising given the long, bitter conflict between them. It was difficult to overcome decades of fear, antagonism, and mistrust and to fashion new collective identities that were not based on victimhood and memories of past traumas. While numerous grassroots initiatives tried to promote dialogue, understanding, and reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians, especially among children and youth, these were only small-scale, generally poorly funded efforts that reached a limited audience. For the most part, the Oslo peace process was a top-down, elite-driven undertaking. The



vast majority of Israelis and Palestinians were not participants in the process but spectators watching from the sidelines. Hence, the psychological barrier between them remained in place, and little to no reconciliation occurred. This meant that when peace talks took place at the Camp David summit, neither side's public was prepared to support the kinds of concessions that a peace agreement required. It also meant that when the Second Intifada started, most Israelis and Palestinians were all too ready to endorse their own sides' increasingly violent actions and blame the other side.

An International Peace Fund would greatly assist in scaling up grassroots initiatives to build a foundation for a process toward a just and lasting peace. Creating a lasting peace requires sustained engagement with communities directly affected by the conflict and working on measures that help generate the trust, ideas, policies, and future leadership essential for long-term conflict resolution.

Peace-building projects are acutely aware of the power imbalance between Israelis and Palestinians, including the occupation, and strive to address it directly through non-violent empowerment and dialogue. By creating spaces for Palestinians to voice their realities and challenge Israeli Jews on issues like occupation, these projects foster awareness and empathy, encouraging Israeli Jews to support the equal rights of Palestinians. Engaging Israelis and Palestinians in meaningful encounters and joint projects that contribute to both Palestinian and Israeli societies of change, which demand government accountability. The trust and mutual understanding cultivated in these interactions form the indispensable social foundation for any sustainable political resolution.

For Palestinians, peace-building serves as a platform for empowerment, resilience and justice. It amplifies their voices and provides tools to challenge systemic oppression and advocate for their rights.

What You Can Do

Write polite and respectful letters to:

Senator The Hon. Penny Wong

Minister for Foreign Affairs
PO Box 6100
Senate
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP

Prime Minister
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra, ACT, 2600

Salutation: Dear Minister

Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

Points to make in your letter:

- Thank the Australian Government for its approach to trying to curb the extent of the killing in the Israeli and Hamas conflict and its support for upholding human rights.
- Ask that Minister Wong attend the UK Government on 16 March to promote Palestinian and Israeli non-violent peace-building towards a lasting and just outcome to the conflict.
- Request that the Australian Government support the establishment of an International Peace Fund for Israel and Palestine, as supported by the UK Government.
- Request the Australian Government make a meaningful and ongoing contribution to an International Peace Fund.
- Point out that peace-building civil society organisations are essential for promoting ideas, leaders, and institutions that provide a political space for a genuine diplomatic process. A serious diplomatic peace process without an ambitious civil society strategy will not succeed. An ambitious civil society strategy without a serious diplomatic peace strategy will have limited reach and legitimacy. Each is essential, and neither can work without the other.