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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Belize Calls on the Reinstatement of Funds to UNRWA**

*Belmopan, February 2, 2024.*

The Government of Belize is deeply concerned over the decision of 16 donor countries to suspend contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. The UNRWA is the principal UN body providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people.

UNRWA's assistance is especially critical for the survival of the people in Gaza being affected by the current conflict. The United Nations has issued a warning that famine "is looming" in Gaza, and the survival of over two million people is being gravely put at risk by weakening the UNRWA through lack of funding.

The Government of Belize urges those countries to reconsider their decision and reinstate immediately the contributions to UNRWA that are necessary to be able to assist the millions of displaced persons in the Gaza Strip who have lost everything and are depending solely on the assistance provided by UNRWA. By imperiling the capacity of UNRWA to continue its lifesaving aid operations, the humanitarian crisis in Gaza is bound to worsen.

Belize also reiterates its call for a total cease-fire by Israel and Hamas and the removal of all military equipment and personnel from the Gaza Strip. Belize calls for safe and unimpeded access for the passage of humanitarian assistance that is critical for the survival of people in Gaza, especially women, children, persons with disabilities and the elderly.

**Ends**