



March 10, 2026

Michelle Small
Special Procedures
United Nations, Human Rights Council
Palais des Nations
1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland

Via Email: ohchr-registry@un.org

Re: AL OTH 163/2025

Dear Ms. Small:

We are in receipt of your letter dated 23 January 2026, directed to Rev. Johnnie Moore, on behalf of the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF). We respectfully object to the allegations in your letter that the activities of GHF and its contractors contributed to, enabled, or directly resulted in grave human rights violations and serious breaches of international law. We are also deeply troubled by the letter's material inaccuracies regarding GHF, and its inappropriate effort to tie GHF to alleged human rights violations and abuses committed by the Government of Israel, the Israeli Defense Force (IDF), and Hamas.

GHF was established as an independent organization with only one goal: to deliver emergency food aid to civilians in Gaza. While operational from late May 2025 to late October 2025, GHF delivered more than 187 million meals directly to Palestinian civilians.

GHF was composed of humanitarian professionals with many years of experience delivering humanitarian aid in challenging environments. GHF's security contractors were also highly trained and experienced professionals, many of whom previously served in the U.S. military. GHF at no time operated under the "control" of the Israeli military, or any other government entity, contrary to the false assertion in the letter. GHF received no funding from the Israeli government. GHF was not an official or unofficial arm of the Israeli, U.S. or any other government, though like all aid providers working in conflict zones, GHF was of course subject to security restrictions imposed by military authorities. Nor did GHF or its contractors support, promote, or participate in any kind of military activity, or instruct any party to the conflict in Gaza.

GHF was operating in Gaza under extraordinarily difficult circumstances. It was an active combat area, with GHF's committed workforce subjected to daily life-threatening risks. Of note, while operational, Hamas assassinated twelve Palestinian GHF aid workers, captured and

tortured numerous others and threatened the lives of all GHF local works and their families. Nonetheless, at all times, GHF and its contractors recognized their responsibilities to respect human rights, including in relation to security measures. Contrary to the false accusations and insinuations in your letter, GHF and its contractors were well-trained, vetted and subject to strict policies regarding engagement and the use of force. Their job was to protect local workers, secure the reception and staging of aid deliveries, and assure safe and controlled food distributions at secure sites. It is spurious to suggest, as the letter does, that security personnel operated without supervision or appropriate training, and could use deadly force “without clear rules of engagement or guidance on what use of force was considered appropriate.”

It is also irresponsible, and both factually and legally inaccurate, to suggest that private security contractors, retained exclusively to provide security for civilians and aid workers at aid distribution sites who faced daily threats to their lives, were somehow “mercenaries.” At no time did they “intervene” or otherwise participate in hostilities on behalf of a party to the conflict, or meet any other criteria for a mercenary under international humanitarian law or as set forth in your letter. Their sole purpose was to protect the innocent civilians seeking aid and the humanitarian workers seeking to alleviate the horrors of the conflict. To conclude, as your letter stated, that delivering aid and providing security for aid distribution is “direct participation in hostilities” is reckless and simply incorrect.

To be clear, despite allegations that have been thoroughly and fully disproven, and as repeatedly explained to UN organs, GHF security contractors personnel were not involved in any instances involving the inappropriate or unlawful use of force or human rights abuses. In the same vein, the letter’s bald contention, “Killings of Palestinians have continued” at secure distribution sites “since” GHF began operations, defies fact and logic as GHF has not been operational for four months.

We are of course aware—and deeply saddened by—reports of violence within areas of active hostilities outside the immediate proximity of GHF aid sites, including reports of shootings involving the IDF. GHF aid sites worked amidst an active combat zone, where violence, unfortunately, was endemic. To the extent there were reported abuses of any sort, regardless of the actors involved or the location where they occurred, GHF consistently and unequivocally supported independent investigations. GHF also repeatedly and publicly advocated for the IDF to exercise restraint. However, a critical distinction must be drawn between violence at the aid sites themselves and at a distance from aid sites, including at UN trucks and warehouses.

We will not labor to correct each additional misstatement and mischaracterization throughout the letter, but ask your teams to reassess your facts and understanding. However, we will address a few more false allegations to help illustrate the fundamental unreliability of the letter’s assertions. Among the most egregious is the manifestly false assertion that US trained contractors working for GHF alongside Israeli forces killed more than 2,000 and injured more than 4,000 Palestinians seeking food and aid. GHF contractors provided security solely inside the perimeter of the aid distribution sites, and had no role or involvement in operations conducted by the IDF or Hamas outside the sites. This statement is simply wrong.

The letter also references difficulties for vulnerable populations in accessing the secure distribution sites; GHF made special efforts to provide aid to groups that may be vulnerable to harms, including children, elder aid recipients, and women. The letter's suggestion that GHF was established to prevent other groups from distributing aid is belied by GHF's repeated, indeed near-daily, public statements making clear that it welcomed the UN and other entities that shared its mission of delivering food aid to civilians. Similarly misleading is the insinuation that GHF's interest in providing food aid was limited to southern Gaza, contrary to GHF's many public statements in support of expanding its activities to the north and your letter's own assertion that the IDF, and not GHF, selected and built the distribution sites. Likewise, the letter's statement that GHF staff may have killed and injured aid seekers "by directing gunfire at those who attempted to cross barriers to seek aid" is simply and categorically untrue.

Although we appreciate the opportunity to respond to the contents in the letter, and your commitment not to "prejudge the accuracy of the allegations," we have deep concern about the numerous material falsehoods in the letter and their origins. Our concern is amplified by the fact that GHF, on multiple occasions in writing, advised UN organs of similar – and sometimes identical – inaccuracies. We hope you will refrain from publishing a document with so many serious false allegations. To the extent you do publish the letter, we hope that any responsible reader refrains from relying upon them.

Sincerely,


John A
Interim Exec
Gaza Humanitarian Foundation