



August 26, 2024

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken,

As you are aware, the AFT has stood with the Administration in its efforts to end the war in Gaza, release the hostages, surge humanitarian aid, and work to a long term conclusion of peace, security, and self-determination for both Israel and the Palestinian Territories.

At our most recent AFT convention, we reiterated our strong support of your mission for two sovereign states as the only path to lasting peace. I have attached our official resolution passed by the convention.

I am writing today to call your attention to the imprisonment of a Palestinian teacher and union leader, Ms. Fatima Nimer Al-Rimawi, who has been incarcerated since January in the notorious Damon military prison near Haifa.

I am requesting the assistance of the State Department to support the Embassy in Jerusalem, and any other Department of State offices, to plead for Fatima to have access to needed medical care, access to her lawyer, and her immediate release.

I know Fatima personally and I have visited with her and her colleagues on several occasions during the past ten years. Her union is a partner of the AFT, and our work together has focused on the social and emotional well-being of teachers and students.

Fatima was arrested by the Israel Defense Forces in her home this past January. Since then, she has been detained without trial, without access to needed medical care, or visits from her family or lawyer. She has been arrested on charges of assisting terrorism, based on posts to her Facebook page. She is being held in the Damon women's prison, a place that had been long criticized by human rights groups for abuse, psychological and emotional torture, isolation, dangerous conditions, and inadequate food and water.

The AFT is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

AFT, AFL-CIO

AFT Teachers
AFT PSRP
AFT Higher Education
AFT Public Employees
AFT Nurses and Health
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We consider Ms. Rimawi part of our worldwide family of educators. We look forward to hearing from you about any actions that you may be able to take on her behalf.

Sincerely,

Randi Weingarten
President

cc: Mr. Jake Sullivan, National Security Advisor of the United States
Ms. Kelly M. Fay Rodriguez, U.S. Department of State