

# An Open letter to Obama

Friday, 09 January 2009

DON'T LET THE WORLD DOWN!  
An Open Letter to President-Elect of the United States  
His Excellency Barrack Obama

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Jakarta, 9 January 2009

His Excellency Barrack Obama  
President-Elect of the United States of America  
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. Obama,

Warm greeting from Indonesia!

First of all, please allow us &ndash;leaders of Indonesian civil society organisations-- to take this opportunity to wish you a Happy New Year. The 2008 has been a memorable and historic year, not only for you personally and for the United States, but also for all of us around the world. Your election as the President of the United States has brought great hope around the world about a new America, a changed America, and an America that would cherish and abide by the ideals of justice, freedom, equality, and harmony.

We are aware of the challenges you will be soon facing as the US president after the inauguration on 20 January, especially at the domestic fronts. The challenge of managing the leadership transition, and the great task of restoring the American economy, would demand your utmost attention and energy. We realize that providing jobs to millions of Americans and restoring domestic and international confidence in the US economy would occupy the highest priority for your presidency.

Your Excellency,

We are confident that America is not a selfish nation. We are convinced that America, despite its internal challenges and problems, would never abandon its obligation and responsibility to the international community. We have a great hope that America would once again be willing to return to the tradition of exercising a global leadership role in a just and responsible manner in order to create a peaceful global order characterised by equality, mutual respects, and freedom. We believe that deep in their hearts Americans would wish to see their country standing up against any injustice, oppression, and inequality in every corner of the earth.

The plight of millions of Palestinians should never escape your attention and the attention of millions of Americans. For decades, millions of Palestinians &ndash;especially women and children&mdash;have been living in fear and injustices. For decades, Palestinians have been enduring the terrible impacts of oppression. For decades, the Palestinians have

been struggling to restore their dignity as a sovereign nation free from any oppression from outside forces. For decades, millions of Palestinians have been yearning for those values cherished by America: sustainable and genuine peace based on the values of justice, equality, and freedom.

Their struggle for peace has become more difficult in the face of current military offensive by Israel. The aggression by Israel in Gaza has brought about a great humanitarian tragedy. Hundreds of innocent civilians &ndash;especially women and children--have been killed. We should never allow thousands others to lose hope in a better future. We should prevent the prospect for a sustainable and genuine peace in the Middle East from becoming even more remote. We should avert any possibility that the current crisis in Gaza would serve as a source of global tension among nations and among civilisations.

Your Excellency,

For those reasons, we would like to make an appeal to you to devote your attention and energy to this issue after you officially assume the office of the President of the United States on 20 January. As a global power, the US must exercise its influence to resolve the Palestine-Israel conflict. This should be done by, first of all, putting pressure on the Government of Israel to immediately resort to ceasefire, in order to make space for further peace efforts.

We encourage you to immediately play a decisive role in bringing peace to the conflict between the two nations. We hope that you and your government place a paramount importance to the resolution of the conflict by making a two states solution a reality. We hope America would work with other peace-loving nations to ensure that Palestinian-Israeli conflict be resolved once and for all, so that the two nations could live side-by-side in perpetual peace.

We believe that a historic moment is awaiting you. There is a great deal of hope and confidence around the world that under your leadership and commitment, peace in the region could be closer than what we imagine. That, however, would require a sustained effort on your side; an effort guided by a just, genuine, unbiased, and decisive determination and leadership role.

Your Excellency,

Great opportunity does not come very often. We believe that a golden opportunity is now with us. We urge you to seize that opportunity and work to bring peace to millions of Palestinians and Israelis, and indeed to the world at large. Billions of citizens of the earth is waiting for an America that could be remembered and respected as a great peace-making nation.

Finally, on behalf of millions of Indonesians, we wish you a successful presidency and look forward to your leadership in bringing America back to the family of peace loving community of nations.

Sincerely yours,

Leaders of Indonesian Civil Society Organizations

Prof. Dr. Din Syamsuddin  
Chairman of Muhammadiyah/Coordinator

Supported and signed by 100 leaders of Indonesian Civil Society