

U.S. Rep. Pocan: Members of Congress release statement on violence in Gaza

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WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Representatives Mark Pocan (WI-02), Pramila Jayapal (WA-07), Keith Ellison (MN-05), Henry C. “Hank” Johnson Jr. (GA-04), and Raúl Grijalva (AZ-03) released the following statement in response to reports that Israel Defense Forces have killed more than 50 Palestinians and injured more than 2,000 at the Gaza border today.

“We are shocked and dismayed by the lethal force used by Israeli troops against mostly unarmed protestors demonstrating at Gaza’s border, which has led to the deaths of more than 50 Palestinians and the wounding of over two thousand people in one day alone.

“Over the past weeks of demonstrations, we have repeatedly urged Israeli soldiers to abide by international law and refrain from shooting live ammunition on protestors. We have also demanded that Gazan demonstrators show restraint and peacefully exercise their right to assemble and protest.

“We commend Israeli human rights groups and civil society leaders who are urging Israeli troops to refuse to comply with unlawful open-fire orders. Unarmed demonstrators breaching a fence is not an imminent threat to life, which is the only legal justification for the use of lethal force.

“President Trump’s provocative decision to relocate the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem appears to have emboldened Israeli reactions to demonstrators, culminating in

some of the highest levels of violence experienced in the area in weeks.

“We ask that Netanyahu’s government show utmost restraint, allow for unfettered medical attention for those who have been wounded, and ease a 12-year blockade on Gaza, which has contributed to grave food insecurity, unemployment and a humanitarian crisis for Gaza’s two million inhabitants. We believe the people of Gaza must be shown compassion and relief, and we remain steadfastly committed to ensuring Israel’s security.”