



Frozen

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Ever since Inauguration Day 2025, the flurry of executive orders coming from President Trump has felt like a firehose directly pointed at the faces of all those who rely on the US government for anything. Hiring freezes, funding freezes, firings, and targeted attacks on various marginalized groups are all meant to show that the president can do whatever he wants with no checks on his power by Congress or our judicial system. It is also meant to make those of us who oppose these orders feel frozen and powerless.

Let's be clear: these orders will affect almost everyone who lives in this country in one way or another and it will affect a significant percentage of the global population. It is highly likely that people will die because of these orders. And that is not hyperbole.

In just one example, the freeze of foreign assistance from the US State Department will affect the cleanup of mines and unexploded ordnance in other countries. On average, fifteen people around the world are killed each day by mines and other unexploded remnants of war—half of whom are children. Left uncleared, landmines and other unexploded munitions threatens the lives of civilians, aid workers, and even US military personnel. In 2022 alone, US-funded programs cleared over 43,000 acres of land and provided medical and rehabilitative care to over 53,000 survivors of landmines.¹ Not to mention the amount of aid that goes toward vaccinations, HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention, and other global health initiatives that save lives.

However, these funding freezes don't affect foreign aid provided by the Pentagon. This means that while lifesaving and violence-preventing foreign aid has been frozen, the provision of

weapons and other military equipment that contribute to conflict is continuing. And the money doled out by the Pentagon for foreign military aid is much higher than the amount provided in foreign assistance by the US State Department. In just one example, the United States provided \$17.9 billion to Israel for its military operations from October 7, 2023 to September 30, 2024.² Whereas in that same period, USAID provided around \$1 billion in humanitarian assistance to Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank.³

In the face of these executive orders, we as people of faith must not be frozen. We cannot react to every order, but we must decide what is important to us and to our community and focus on that issue. Are you concerned for the refugee, immigrant, or LGBTQ communities in your area? Find a local organization led by and working directly with those folks and see what support they need.

Next, find an organization in another country to support. [Global Ministries](#) has around 200 partners in 90 countries working on a variety of issues including climate change, migration, human trafficking, peace, and economic issues. Most of the issues affecting our local communities also affect communities in other countries.

In this time of attacks on the basic dignity and rights of our fellow humans, we must be clear about our values, and we must follow the example of Jesus by walking alongside those who are being directly impacted.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rebekah Choate serves as the Minister for Global Advocacy and Education, Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ.

¹ <https://www.state.gov/reports/to-walk-the-earth-in-safety-2023/>

² <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/papers/2024/USspendingIsrael>

³ <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/sep-30-2024-united-states-announces-nearly-336-million-humanitarian-assistance-support-palestinians-gaza-and-west-bank>

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