

**United States Senate**  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 25, 2024

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

Dear Secretary Blinken,

We are writing regarding your August 29, 2022, response to our letter of July 12, 2022, concerning the shooting death of Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh.

In your letter, you stated that “the [U.S. Security Coordinator] USSC concluded that gunfire from ISF positions . . . was likely responsible but that there was no evidence to indicate her killing was intentional.” You also stated that cooperation among Israel, the Palestinian Authority (PA), and the USSC “is the best path towards supporting a thorough, transparent, and impartial investigation, and the Department remains engaged with Israel and the PA on next steps.” You stated that “we expect accountability” and the Administration would “continue to engage with Israel in seeking accountability and next steps of the investigation, as well as to encourage Israel to closely review its policies and practices and consider additional steps to mitigate civilian harm and prevent future similar tragedies.”

With nearly two years having passed, we seek information regarding several important unanswered questions. In addition to still seeking answers to our original questions 2, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13, we also request updates on the following:

- What was the basis for the USSC’s conclusion that Ms. Akleh’s killing was “unintentional?”
  - Did the Israeli Government determine the identity of the shooter, and if so, did the USSC interview the shooter or any of the other IDF personnel or other witnesses who were present when she was killed? If not, why not?
  - What evidence, if any, is there to support a conclusion that Ms. Akleh, or anyone else in her proximity, was armed, or that the shooter acted in legitimate self-defense when he shot her?
- What accountability, if any, has there been for those responsible for Ms. Akleh’s death?
- What “next steps” were taken by Israel in the investigation?
- Has a “thorough, impartial, and transparent investigation” occurred? If so, by whom and with what result? If not, why not?
- What changes, if any, did Israel make to its policies and practices “to mitigate civilian harm and prevent future similar tragedies,” because of Ms. Akleh’s death, and with what result?

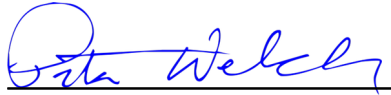
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We remain deeply troubled by Ms. Abu Akleh's violent death. She was not only an innocent American citizen; she was a brave journalist who was killed doing her job. A thorough, transparent, and impartial investigation must be conducted, and there must be accountability. We urge the Administration to insist on nothing less.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Peter Welch  
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy  
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator