

# Adelphi Friends Meeting

## Peace Minute on the Conflict in Israel and Palestine

April 14, 2024

We are heartbroken by the terror, violence and devastation in Israel and Palestine. We believe in the sacred worth of each human being. We reaffirm the declaration of the first generation of Quakers in 1660: “We utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fighting with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretense whatsoever; and this is our testimony to the whole world.”

We unequivocally condemn all violent attacks and inhumane treatment of civilians in this conflict. We call for the immediate release of all hostages taken by Hamas as well as uncharged detainees in Israeli prisons. We recognize that all people have a legitimate concern for security: we understand Israel’s desire to seek safety for its people from the threat of Hamas and we understand the Palestinians’ desire for freedom from the threat of destruction by the Israeli government. However, we believe that long-term safety can never be achieved through violence.

We particularly recognize the role our government plays in prolonging the agony of both Palestinians and Israelis by supplying huge amounts of weapons to one side and refusing to call for a permanent ceasefire. This support has enabled the aggressive military attack on Gaza by the Israeli government that has killed more than 32,000 Palestinians to date, primarily women and children, displaced more than one million Palestinians in Gaza, and destroyed homes, hospitals, and vital infrastructure. The ongoing siege of Gaza blocks access to water, food, fuel, electricity, and medicine. People are starving and thirsty, thousands are injured, and overwhelmed medical facilities cannot help those in need. We call for an immediate end to our government’s transfer of weapons to Israel; until then, we, as US citizens, are complicit in the destruction.

In addition to ending military transfers, we urge our government to call for a

permanent ceasefire, provide immediate and adequate humanitarian aid, and begin negotiations for a long-term peace based on political self-determination and human rights for all. As both American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL) have long emphasized, a lasting peace with justice for all will require addressing the underlying causes of the conflict. As noted by these two Quaker organizations, the root causes include 57 years of Israel's military occupation of Palestinian territories; 16 years of a crushing blockade of Gaza; the rapid expansion of illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank; and the U.S. government's financial, diplomatic, and military support for these Israeli policies. Only peace with justice will establish a lasting peace where all people can live sustainable lives, including economic, environmental, religious freedom and human rights.

As Adelphi Friends Meeting, we pray that this lengthy conflict be ended quickly in a way that insures freedom, safety, and justice for all. Let us seek paths to work for peace with the tools available to us. We are called to act in faith and love, with persistence, patience, and courage, as partners and hands of the divine spirit as we pursue the sacred goal of peace, shalom, salaam.