

Publicly Call for a Ceasefire in Gaza and Lebanon

We are heartbroken by the ongoing violence in Israel, Gaza, Lebanon, and across the Middle East region. As Quakers, we deeply mourn the loss of all lives and pray for those who have lost loved ones in this war.

We unequivocally condemn Hamas' brutal attacks on October 7, 2024 and call for the release of all hostages. We also condemn the indiscriminate and violent Israeli response in Gaza and Lebanon that has claimed the lives of tens of thousands of civilians and call for an immediate ceasefire to end the killing.

Hamas killed more than 1,200 Israelis in the October 7 attacks and took roughly 200 civilian hostages into Gaza. The subsequent Israeli military campaign on Gaza and Lebanon has killed tens of thousands of people, the majority of whom are women and children, and displaced almost 2 million more.

Since the escalation began, the Israeli government has restricted food, fuel, and humanitarian assistance to the Gaza Strip. The U.N. is warning of a looming famine and a spiraling Polio epidemic if urgent action is not taken. More than a million people have been internally displaced several times due to the fighting. There is currently no safe place in Gaza and "safe zones" throughout the Strip are repeatedly getting bombed by Israeli warplanes. As the bombardment and blockade persist, the humanitarian toll continues to mount.

More war and weapons won't bring peace. In the face of growing violence, lawmakers must:

- » Publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza and Lebanon to prevent further loss of life;
- » Prohibit the transfer of more lethal weapons and military assistance to Israel;
- » Prioritize the protection of all civilians by urgently permitting humanitarian aid to freely enter Gaza and Lebanon, fully funding UNRWA (the U.N. agency supporting Palestinian refugees) and other vital aid operations, and working to secure the release of hostages;
- » Publicly call for an end to further annexation and Israeli settler violence in the West Bank;
- » Work diplomatically to support regional de-escalation across the Middle East; and
- » Urge all parties to fully respect International Humanitarian Law. Publicly call for a ceasefire to prevent the further loss of life;
- » Prioritize the protection of all civilians by urgently permitting humanitarian aid into Gaza and working to secure the release of hostages; and
- » Urge all parties to fully respect international humanitarian law.

Call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and Lebanon, regional de-escalation, and humanitarian access to prevent further civilian harm throughout the region.

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