

October 16, 2023

We, the undersigned organizations, write to express our urgent concern regarding dire and escalating violence in Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territory, which continues to result in significant human suffering and loss of civilian life.

We condemn all violence against civilians by Hamas and the Israeli military. In this critical moment, we believe it is imperative that U.S. policymakers take measures to immediately de-escalate the violence to prevent the further loss of civilian life. We urge Congress and the Administration to:

1. Publicly call for a ceasefire to prevent the further loss of life;
2. Prioritize the protection of all civilians, including by urgently securing the entrance of humanitarian aid into Gaza and working to secure the release of hostages; and
3. Urge all parties to fully respect international humanitarian law.

We implore Congress and the Administration to abstain from rhetoric that exacerbates violence and to unequivocally condemn all violations of international law. Over the last several days, the Israeli government has cut all food, fuel, and humanitarian assistance to the Gaza Strip. On October 12, Israel issued an evacuation order for the entire northern Gaza Strip, telling residents to evacuate south of Wadi Gaza. This amounts to approximately 1.1 million people. The U.N. is calling for this order to be rescinded, warning it will have “devastating humanitarian consequences.”

We again urge Congress and the Administration to publicly call for, and help to facilitate, an immediate ceasefire to prevent the tragic loss of more innocent Palestinian and Israeli lives. Thank you for your urgent consideration.

Sincerely,

Alliance of Baptists
American Baptist Churches USA
American Friends Service Committee
American Muslims for Palestine
Americans for Justice in Palestine
Anera
Arab American Institute
Auburn Theological Seminary
Center for Civilians in Conflict
Center for Jewish Nonviolence
Center for Victims of Torture
Church of the Brethren, Office of Peacebuilding and Policy
Churches for Middle East Peace
Common Defense
Council on American-Islamic Relations
Demand Progress
Democracy for the Arab World Now
The Episcopal Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Fellowship of Reconciliation
Freedom Forward
Friends Committee on National Legislation

Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect
Grassroots International
Historians for Peace and Democracy
Humanity & Inclusion
If Not Now
Institute for Policy Studies New Internationalism Project
International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)
Israel/Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Jewish Voice for Peace Action
Just Foreign Policy
Justice Democrats
Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention
MADRE
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Mennonite Central Committee U.S.
Minnesota Peace Project
MPower Change Action Fund
National Council of Churches
National Iranian American Council
Neighbors for Peace
Nonviolent Peaceforce
PAX
Pax Christi USA
PC(USA) Office of Public Witness
Peace Action
Project on Middle East Democracy
Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft
Quixote Center
ReThinking Foreign Policy
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
RootsAction
September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows
Sojourners
The Duty Legacy
The Unitarian Universalist Association
The United Methodist Church - General Board of Church and Society
The Zomia Center
United Church of Christ
United for Peace and Justice
UNRWA USA
Women for Weapons Trade Transparency
Working Families Party
World BEYOND War
Yemen Freedom Council
Yemen Relief and Reconstruction Foundation
Yemeni Alliance Committee