



Working Together: Justice can prevail. Peace is possible.

Call for an Immediate Ceasefire, De-escalation, and Humanitarian Assistance to Gaza

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) is a coalition of more than 30 national Church communions and organizations working to encourage U.S. policies that actively promote just, lasting, and comprehensive resolutions to conflicts in the Middle East.

We are heartbroken by the ongoing violence in Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territory, and we are deeply concerned about the escalating conflict in the region. As Christians, we mourn the loss of all life and pray for those who have lost loved ones in this conflict.

We unequivocally condemn Hamas' attacks and inhumane treatment of hostages and call for their immediate release. We also condemn the indiscriminate and violent Israeli response that has already claimed thousands of civilian lives.

Hamas killed more than 1,200 Israelis in the Oct. 7 attack and took an estimated 250 civilian hostages into Gaza. The subsequent Israeli military attack on Gaza has killed tens of thousands of Palestinians, the majority of whom are women and children.

Since the escalation began, the Israeli government has restricted food, fuel, and humanitarian assistance to Gaza. The U.N. is warning of a looming famine if urgent action is not taken. More than a million people have been internally displaced due to the fighting. Our church partners tell us the ongoing viability of the historic Christian community in Gaza, Jerusalem and the West Bank is in question. There is currently no safe place in Gaza. As the bombardment and blockade persist, the humanitarian toll mounts.

In response to the growing violence, we ask lawmakers to:

- Publicly call for bilateral ceasefire to prevent the further loss of life;
- Support demilitarization of the conflict rather than supplying additional military aid or arms to Israel;
- Prioritize the protection of all civilians by opposing any legislative efforts to block funding for UNRWA (the U.N. agency supporting Palestinian refugees) and other aid operations, and working to secure the release of hostages; and
- Work diplomatically to support regional de-escalation and address the root causes of the violence in order to move all parties toward a lasting, just peace that protects all human life and ensures long-term security and sustainability.

Each day that the violence continues increases the death toll in Gaza and fosters further hatred toward Israel and the United States, irreparably damaging the moral standing of the United States in the broader Middle East.

Contact:
Kyle Cristofalo
Senior Director,
Gov't Relations
kyle@cmep.org

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