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Media Contact:

media@cmap.org

202-543-1222

Joint Statement - Open Call for a Ceasefire in Gaza, Lebanon and Israel and End to Impunity

Churches for Middle East Peace joined more than 150 international NGOs in calling for UN Member States to immediately secure a ceasefire in Gaza, Israel, Lebanon, and across the region. The statement makes clear that "Governments must do everything in their power to end this growing catastrophe and cycle of impunity. It is not only a moral imperative but a legal obligation." A full copy of the statement and list of signatories is available below.

We, the undersigned organisations, appeal to all UN member states to secure an immediate ceasefire across Gaza, Lebanon, Israel and the region, and to end the impunity that has allowed atrocities by Israeli forces against civilians to continue and escalate. Without accountability, there will be no red lines and no rock bottom.

Israel's war in Gaza, following the deadly attacks by Palestinian armed groups on 7 October 2023, is the latest and most horrific onslaught of violence in the decades-long Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory. After a year of unfathomable killing and destruction, patterns of civilian harm by Israeli forces are spreading and escalating from Gaza to Lebanon, while rocket attacks by armed groups in Lebanon continue.

We are now on the precipice of even greater devastation across the region.

Failure to act now is a choice - a choice that will fail to stop and prevent future atrocities. The UN Commission of Inquiry [concluded](#) last week that Israel has committed war crimes and the crime against humanity of extermination with relentless and deliberate attacks on medical personnel and facilities in Gaza, and called on member states to "[cease aiding or assisting in the commission of violations](#)."

Over the last 12 months, the UN Security Council has passed four resolutions on Gaza, including one calling for a ceasefire, and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has ordered Israel to take all measures within its power to prevent the commission of all acts within the scope of Article II of the Genocide Convention. The ICJ also issued an Advisory Opinion that found that Israel's occupation¹ and annexation of Palestinian territory is illegal, and the UN General Assembly passed a resolution demanding that Israel end its unlawful presence in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) within 12 months. Despite this, none of these measures have been implemented or adhered to.

The international community's egregious disregard for international law and the government of Israel's unchecked impunity in Gaza, the West Bank and now Lebanon, has set dangerous new precedents for the conduct of war.

For civilians in the occupied Palestinian territory, Lebanon and Israel this has resulted in:

- Israeli military actions killing over [43,000 Palestinians](#) across the oPt and more than [2,000 people](#) in Lebanon.
- Israeli forces issuing displacement orders covering over [84% of Gaza's territory](#) and now [25% of Lebanon's territory](#). These orders, combined with Israel's bombardment, have forcibly displaced around [90% of Gaza's population](#) and over [800,000 people](#) in Lebanon.
- An estimated 400,000 Palestinians are under siege and relentless bombardment in northern Gaza without access to food, water, fuel, or medical care. ([UNRWA](#))
- The killing of [over 300 Palestinian and international aid workers](#), and over [1000 health care](#) workers in Gaza and [95 in Lebanon](#). UN peacekeeping forces in Lebanon are also coming under attack by Israeli

forces ([UNIFIL](#)). Israeli military attacks on hospitals, clinics, and ambulances have decimated the health care system in Gaza, and are [destroying it in Lebanon](#) - leaving millions without access to care.

- Countless children and adults are dying of malnutrition and facing the risk of starvation, directly induced by the Israeli government's siege on Gaza, which includes systematic obstruction of humanitarian aid and essential services. ([IPC](#))
- The killing of nearly 1,200 people in Israel during the Palestinian armed group led attacks on October 7, 2023 ([OCHA](#)).
- Rockets fired by Palestinian and Lebanese armed groups have killed and injured dozens of people ([Amnesty International](#)) and displaced over [140,000 Israelis](#).
- [101 hostages](#) remain held by Palestinian armed groups, and thousands of Palestinians are unlawfully [detained](#) by Israeli forces in detention centers, including children, many whose whereabouts are unknown and have effectively disappeared.

Many among us have repeatedly called for a permanent and unconditional [ceasefire](#), [hostage release](#), a [halt to arms transfers](#), and [de-escalation](#) of tensions in the region, and yet the violence only appears to be intensifying.

Again, we call on all Heads of State and Governments, the UN Security Council, and actors on the ground to prioritise the preservation of human life above all else by:

- Securing an immediate ceasefire by all parties to the conflict and an end to the indiscriminate attacks that kill civilians and destroy civilian infrastructure;
- Halting the transfer of weapons, parts, and ammunition to parties to the conflict that may be used to commit violations of international humanitarian law (IHL);
- Enabling unhindered humanitarian access for the delivery of lifesaving assistance, including food, medical supplies and fuel, and the safe movements of civilians and aid workers.
- Ensuring the protection of civilians from further forced displacement, and the right to return for those forcibly displaced. Civilians who choose to stay or are unable to leave remain protected under international law.
- Securing the release of all hostages and detainees.
- Immediately activating independent international investigations into all apparent violations of international humanitarian law and war crimes committed by all parties.

Governments must do everything in their power to end this growing catastrophe and cycle of impunity. It is not only a moral imperative but a legal obligation. All Member States must prevent further atrocities and ensure that those responsible for any violations of international law, including war crimes and crimes against humanity, are held accountable. Failure to act now risks further eroding international norms and emboldening perpetrators. The cycle of violence against civilians needs to stop.

Signatories:

1. ABCD Bethlehem
2. Access Center for Human Rights (ACHR)
3. AFSC, American Friends Service Committee
4. ALEF - act for human rights
5. Alternatives Internationales
6. Amos Trust
7. Anglican Pacifist Fellowship
8. Applied Research Institute-Jerusalem
9. Asamblea de Cooperación por la Paz (ACPP)
10. Asociación Otra Escuela
11. Association Switzerland-Palestine (Gesellschaft Schweiz-Palästina)
12. Avaaz
13. Baytna pour le soutien de la société civile
14. Belgium Palestine Mental Health Network
15. Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies
16. Caritas Internationalis
17. Caritas MONA (Middle East and North Africa)
18. CCFD-Terre Solidaire
19. Children Not Numbers

20. Christian Aid
21. Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP)
22. CIVICUS
23. Clowns Without Borders Sweden
24. Clowns Without Borders UK
25. CNCD-11.11.11
26. Collective Aid
27. Comisión de Justicia y Paz de Confregua
28. Cordaid
29. Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO)
30. Council for Arab-British Understanding (Caabu)
31. Danish Refugee Council
32. DAWN
33. Egala Association
34. Emmaus International
35. Equal Legal Aid
36. EuroMed Rights Network
37. Europe Cares e.V.
38. European Alternatives
39. Fellowship of Reconciliation - USA
40. Fenix Humanitarian Legal Aid
41. Firefly International
42. Forces Watch
43. FORO SALUD NACIONAL
44. France Palestine Mental Health Network
45. FSMAGH (Forum des alternatives Maroc - FMAS) 46. Fund for Global Human Rights
47. Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect
48. Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP)
49. Global Witness
50. Greek Council for Refugees (GCR)
51. HelpAge International
52. Hivos
53. Human Rights & Democracy Media Center "SHAMS"/Palestine 54. Human Rights Sentinel
55. Human Security Collective
56. Humanity & Inclusion/Handicap International
57. ICNA SISTERS CANADA
58. Initiatives et Changement
59. International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) 60. International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)
61. International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)
62. International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR)
63. International Peace Bureau (IPB)
64. INTERSOS
65. Ireland Palestine Mental Health Network

66. Islamic Relief Worldwide
67. Jewish Network for Palestine
68. Jewish Voice for Peace-Health Advisory Council
69. KAIROS Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives
70. Kenya Human Rights Commission
71. KinderUSA
72. Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law
73. Lebanese Center for Human Rights
74. MADRE
75. Mayworks Kijipuktuk/Halifax
76. Médecins du Monde International Network
77. médico international
78. Medicus Mundi Italia
79. Migrant Roots Media
80. Minnesota Peace Project
81. Movement for Community-led Development
82. MPower Change Action Fund
83. Muslim Association of Brantford
84. Muslim Delegates and Allies
85. Musulmanas de Guatemala por Palestina
86. NO NAME KITCHEN
87. Nonviolence International
88. Nonviolent Peaceforce
89. Norwegian Refugee Council
90. Olof Palmes Internationella Center
91. Omega Research Foundation
92. Oxfam
93. Palestinian Assoc. of Brantford
94. PAX
95. Pax Christi Australia
96. Pax christi Deutsche Sektion
97. Pax Christi England and Wales
98. Pax Christi Flanders
99. Pax Christi International
100. Pax Christi Scotland
101. Pax Christi USA
102. Peace Boat
103. Peace Direct
104. Peace SOS
105. Peace Watch Switzerland
106. Peace, Justice, Sustainability, NOW!
107. People's Health Movement (PHM)
108. Permanent Peace Movement
109. Plan International

110. Plateforme des ONG françaises pour la Palestine 111. Polish Medical Mission
 112. Première Urgence Internationale
 113. Progressive Democrats of Pennsylvania
 114. Protection International
 115. PVE Works
 116. Quakers in Scotland (Religious Society of Friends)
 117. Resource Centre for Human Rights & Civic Education (CHRICED) 118. ReThinking Foreign Policy
 119. Rethinking Security
 120. Righting Relations Canada
 121. Saferworld
 122. SAM Organization for Rights and Liberties
 123. Seenaryo
 124. Share The World's Resources
 125. SOS Children's Villages UK
 126. Ster Organization for Human Development
 127. Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR)
 128. Tamkeen for Legal Aid and Human Rights
 129. Terre des Hommes Netherlands
 130. The Advocacy Academy
 131. The Dallaire Institute for Children, Peace, and Security
 132. The Desmond and Leah Tutu Legacy Foundation
 133. The International Federation for Rights and Development - IFRD 134. The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation
 135. The Namibia NGO Forum Trust
 136. The National Organization of Yemeni Reporters SADA 137. The Socio-economic Justice Initiative-MAAN
 138. The Syria Campaign
 139. Train of Hope Dortmund e. V.
 140. UK Palestine Mental Health Network
 141. United Nations Association - UK (UNA-UK)
 142. University Network for Human Rights
 143. US Council of Muslim Organizations (USCMO)
 144. Vision GRAM-International
 145. War Child
 146. WESPAC Foundation, Inc.
 147. WeWorld
 148. WILPF US
 149. Women for Women International
 150. Women's International League for Peace & Freedom-Minnesota, USA, Branch 151. World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)
 152. Yemen Relief and Reconstruction Foundation
 153. مؤسسة الجلك للاستجابة والتنمية.
 154. مؤسسة مدافعات للحقوق والحريات.
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Formed in 1984, Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) is a coalition of more than 30 national church communions and organizations, including Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, and Evangelical traditions that works to encourage US policies that actively promote a comprehensive resolution to conflicts in the Middle East with a focus on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. CMEP works to mobilize US Christians to embrace a holistic perspective and to be advocates of equality, human rights, security, and justice for Israelis, Palestinians, and all people of the Middle East.

Recent CMEP Statements and Press Releases:

Oct 18, 2024: [CHURCHES FOR MIDDLE EAST PEACE \(CMEP\) JOINS 19 OTHER CHRISTIAN FAITH LEADERS IN LETTER TO HARRIS AND TRUMP CAMPAIGNS](#)

Churches for Middle East Peace Executive Director Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon joins 19 other Christian faith leaders in a letter to both Harris and Trump campaigns to express a shared deep concern regarding the ongoing injustice and violations of human rights in Israel/Palestine. The leaders write, "Even as our primary focus for months has been on calling for an immediate end to the violence in Gaza and throughout Israel/Palestine, we know more must be done by the United States government to work toward a just and permanent solution that addresses the core issues so that international human rights are upheld and the most vulnerable are protected. To that end, we offer the following recommendations for what we feel must be addressed by the next administration in their first 100 days in office."

Oct 15, 2024: [Northern Gaza is being erased – global leaders must act now](#)

CMEP along with other Humanitarian and Aid organizations warn of the dire situation in Northern Gaza. The Israeli forces' assault on Gaza has escalated to a horrifying level of atrocity. Northern Gaza is being wiped off the map. Under the guise of "evacuation," Israeli forces have ordered the forced displacement of an estimated 400,000 Palestinians trapped in northern Gaza, including Gaza City. This is not an evacuation—this is forced displacement under gunfire. Since 1 October, no food has been allowed into the area, and civilians are being starved and bombed in their homes and their tents.

October 9, 2024: [Gaza Humanitarian Snapshot #6](#)

A year into the devastating war on Gaza the humanitarian situation in Gaza continues to worsen. Medical supplies, hygiene kits, building supplies, fuel, and more continue to be in rare supply as Israel impedes aid deliveries. Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) and leading humanitarian agencies outline the delay of aid distribution, safety concerns, forced displacement orders, and logistical constraints in this latest Humanitarian Snapshot.

October 7, 2024: [Churches for Middle East Peace Commemorates the One Year Anniversary of Oct. 7th](#)

As we commemorate this tragic anniversary, let us renew our commitment to peace, to the end of the occupation, and to a future where all people in the region can live in security, free from fear and repression, and with their full rights and dignity.

See all of our [public statements](#) and [press releases](#).

Contact Us

Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP)

110 Maryland Ave NE, Suite 505
Washington, District of Columbia 20002
(202) 543-1222 info@cmepeg.org

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