



In response to the ongoing intensity of violence in Palestine/Israel

“[F]reedom from the scourge of war will only be brought about through the faithfulness of individuals to their inmost convictions.”

In dismal times, this quote, from the Friends’ Peace Committee in a London Yearly Meeting minute in 1916, continues to reverberate as violence escalates in Israel/Palestine.

The recent devastating attacks on October 7, 2023, in Israel by Hamas have unleashed a catastrophic response by the Israeli Defense Forces. The cycle of violence has reached a breaking point. We cannot continue down a path of endless intractability. There is a worsening humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Canadian Friends Service Committee calls for an immediate ceasefire and new leaders who are open to paths of nonviolence. Failure to do so risks escalation and even more dangerous conditions.

CFSC denounces the killings and abductions of Israeli civilians as hostages by Hamas, and calls for the swift release of hostages and their safe return. CFSC additionally condemns the increasing violence by the Israeli military. Many Palestinians have been killed, and families are forced to flee and are now displaced, as residences continues to be bombarded in Gaza.

As Quakers, we recognize that each individual has a Light that is irreplaceable. The loss of lives is heartbreaking. Many young children and adults who already struggled to have a voice, are now lifeless. We continue to mourn over the loss of life, and the ongoing tragedies and injustices playing out before us. CFSC calls on the Canadian government to ensure a rapid humanitarian response and support for justice and peace.

In times of war, misinformation is also rapidly circulating online. CFSC calls on the media and independent journalists to ensure factual reporting, while also enhancing the voices of civilians who are seldom seen and heard. We need richer narratives that recognize complexity and speak honestly about the vast power imbalances in this situation.

In this time of great distress, an increasing intensity of polarization and animosity is also reverberating around our world. We condemn all acts of hate taking place in Canada. CFSC calls on each individual to search for and recognize our shared humanity. We can all have a positive role in contributing to more peaceful thinking and engagement with one another.

Further investing in the lives of youth and their education is also crucial for continued pathways to social cohesion. CFSC calls on the Canadian government to provide new investments for peace education, locally and internationally. Together there can be possibilities where we may see one another in a new light, and recognize that we are stronger together than apart.

The process to peace is multifaceted and can never be achieved through continued violence. Understanding and addressing the root causes of the current violence in Palestine/Israel are imperative for a lasting just peace.

Learn more about our [vision and work for a just peace in Israel/Palestine](#).