

## **Minute Concerning the Conflict in Israel and Gaza – Buffalo (NY) Friends Meeting**

As members of the Buffalo (Quaker) Friends Meeting, we condemn the violence unleashed by Hamas and we denounce the retribution of the Israeli Defense Force on Gaza. We urge our government to call for an immediate ceasefire.

As Quakers we know every life is sacred, whether this human being, father, child, mother, brother or sister, is Israeli or Palestinian.

We know that history tells us that retaliatory violence is a failure (e.g., wars of retribution in Iraq and Afghanistan). Violence only begets more violence.

We urge our government to halt our participation in the violence against the people in Gaza, whether through the supply of weapons or by blocking efforts to reach a peaceful solution. Our participation not only escalates the build-up of hatred, it also escalates the potential for a wider war in the Middle East.

We add our voices to the many who demand humanitarian aid for the people of Gaza as they just seek to survive.

We deplore the Israeli government's proposal to pause the military assault for a few hours each day, only to resume the bombing and destruction for the remaining hours of the day. We cannot be lulled into thinking this is a generous offer or even a partial solution to a deadly humanitarian crisis.

All sides in this conflict must ask:

What happens when the death and destruction end?

What is the plan for ensuring peace going forward?

What will bring an end to the brutality and oppression that are the legacy of war?

Our hearts weep: There are no winners.

We believe our government must call for an immediate ceasefire, immediate and adequate humanitarian aid, and immediate negotiations for a long-term peace.