

Minute About Israel-Palestine Conflict

This minute strives to express who and where we are as Roanoke Friends Meeting in light of this painful conflict. As Quakers and the community that is Roanoke Friends Meeting, we find this tear in the fabric of humanity painful and confusing. We find there are difficult questions and no easy answers. Though we struggle individually and collectively to apply a testimony of peace, we find some measure of solid ground in the following.

War is not the answer.

We condemn violence and denounce retribution, on the part of Hamas and the Israeli government, which only create more violence.

Thus: We oppose the killing of Israelis and Palestinians. We support justice for the perpetrators of violence against Jewish people. We support protecting all Israeli and Palestinian lives, with special protections for children. We support the immediate and unimpeded access of international organizations to deliver humanitarian aid wherever it is needed in Palestine. We support the introduction of United Nations peacekeepers into all war-torn areas of Palestine and Israel.

We seek a world free of war and the threat of war.

We advocate for an immediate end to the hostilities to prevent the loss of more lives.

Thus: We oppose support of Israel that involves providing weapons. We support all parties in respecting international law in conflict.

We support Israelis and Palestinians addressing the root causes underlying violence in search of solutions that are just so as to sustain lasting peace.

Thus: We support the right of Israel to exist as an independent nation and support Israel in negotiations to stop those intent on extinguishing Israel. We support the right of Palestine to exist as an independent nation and oppose Israel's complete dominion over the Gaza Strip and continuing settlement of the West Bank as well as the forcible removal of Palestinians from Gaza or the West Bank. We affirm Palestine's right to the exclusive ownership and control by Palestinians of all natural resources and minerals found beneath Palestinian lands and maritime areas. We support the local, regional and international diplomatic work to encourage and assist: the return of every hostage taken on October 7, 2023; an immediate ceasefire; ongoing negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations toward conflict resolution to which all parties must subscribe.

We commit ourselves to seek ways to participate in stopping the current war and preventing violence in the Middle East.