

Raleigh Friends Meeting
Minute on the Crisis in Israel-Palestine
12th Month, 2023

Our hearts are heavy carrying the trauma and devastation of the past 93 days.

We reaffirm the declaration of Quakers (1660): “We utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fighting with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretense whatsoever, and this is our testimony to the whole world.”

We grieve the deeply embedded cycle of violence in the region. We mourn the loss of all Israeli and Palestinian lives in this disastrous conflict, and hold in the Light all those bearing heavy burdens of grief. From the standpoint of Quaker testimony and international law, we condemn the targeting and killing of civilians by any party, and we uphold Quaker testimony against the killing of any people.

To stop the killing and work toward peace, we call for a permanent ceasefire, massive, continuous and unimpeded humanitarian aid into Gaza, and the release of all the Israeli and foreign national hostages being held by Hamas and the Palestinian political prisoners held by the Israelis.

There is no military solution to the underlying issues in this conflict. Violence will only beget fresh waves of violence and counter violence. We call on all nations to cease sending military weapons into this conflict. We recognize that in the United States we have a special responsibility to take action against the policies of our own country that contribute to the violence.

Following the termination of hostilities and military actions, we call for a meaningful peace process, guided and supported by the international community, that will forge a viable political framework for a just and durable peace. The lives and destinies of the Jewish and the Palestinian communities in the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea are intertwined. The ultimate goal must be to find a way for them to co-exist peacefully based on self-determination, security, and equal rights for all.

As Friends, we pray that this lengthy, violent conflict will be ended quickly, and that the way will open to guide Israelis and Palestinians to a just and lasting peace, healing, and reconciliation.

(Approved January 7, 2024)