

Minute Concerning the War in Israel and Palestine

Durham Friends Meeting
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Durham Friends Meeting is deeply concerned about the continuing violence in Israel, Gaza, and the Middle East. As Quakers, we believe that we are never called to fight with weapons either for God or country. Our Quaker faith reminds us that every life is sacred and every person has the capacity to experience and respond to the love and guidance of the divine. Therefore, we hold in our hearts and ache for all those who mourn their family and friends in the Middle East.

To help end this killing, we unite with the calls of people across the world for:

- An immediate ceasefire.
- The use of every available resource to mitigate the suffering and support a diplomatic rather than military resolution to the conflict.
- A prompt release of all the hostages in Gaza and all uncharged prisoners held by Israel. The provision of urgently needed humanitarian aid to Gaza.
- The safety and equal human rights for all Palestinian and Israeli people.

We unconditionally oppose bigotry against Muslims, Jews, Israelis, Palestinians, and other Arabs that has led to the rise in hateful rhetoric and actions targeting these communities in the United States and worldwide. To combat this, we urge our politicians to take the lead in avoiding political rhetoric that emphasizes divisions among us and to focus on that which unites us in our common humanity.

Finally, we urge the President and Congress to join with other nations to address the roots of war and to work for a lasting solution that provides for security, justice, and dignity for all Palestinians and Israelis. Our faith challenges us to resist the escalating pressures throughout our human family that attempt to justify atrocities against other human beings, and to remember that we are each capable of evil, even in the name of good. We take up the commitment to turn from our own hostile impulses, from amplifying division within our local communities, and from the cycles of vengeful action in conflicts worldwide, so we can move toward the courageous work of peacebuilding.

We are called to act in faith and love as partners of the Divine Spirit. Let us seek paths to work with all the tools available to us for Peace, Shalom, Salaam.

*A working group within the Durham Friends Meeting developed this statement based on several sessions in February 2024. We reviewed statements from other Friends meetings, including the Virginia Beach and Tallahassee Meetings, and adapted words and phrases from them when they expressed the sense of our group discernment.

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