

STATEMENT OF CONCERN ABOUT VIOLENCE IN ISRAEL-PALESTINE

The Friends (Quakers) testimony of peace is based on the belief that there is that of God in everyone. Every human deserves the right to live in peace and in dignity. We recognize that using violence leads to more violence and that peace is more than the absence of war. THERE IS NO TRUE PEACE WITHOUT JUSTICE, and history shows us that people who are oppressed will continue to find ways to resist their oppression. We recognize there are complex historical and contemporary roots to this conflict.

More war and weapons will not bring peace. In the face of the growing violence we implore lawmakers to:

- Encourage an immediate, permanent ceasefire on all sides
- Withhold or stop all U.S. military aid or equipment used in this conflict
- Push for the distribution of continuous, unimpeded humanitarian aid where needed
- Promote the release of all the hostages and political prisoners
- Support regional de-escalation across the Middle East
- Advocate for respect of human rights and international law

A just and lasting peace would insure that all cultural and religious identities are respected with equitable geographic and economic resources.

As we focus on Palestine and Israel, can we challenge ourselves to understand our own role in war and conflict, and to seek to extricate ourselves from our role in violence, and seek to live in ways that promote peace – person to person and nation to nation?