

GLOBAL CALL TO ACTION TO STOP THE VIOLENCE IN ISRAEL-PALESTINE:

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IMMEDIATE ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE TO BRING ABOUT AN END TO FIGHTING AND JUST PEACE FOR ALL THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL-PALESTINE

*** **NOTE:** This may be reprinted, reposted, shared, translated (particularly into Hebrew and Arabic). Please share your own ideas as well, and make this available as broadly as possible if you believe it will help people to act ***



In the face of violence the overwhelming majority of us can often feel helpless and powerless, gripped by the belief that 'there's nothing we can do.' The reality is: this isn't true. There is a lot we can do, and we're not alone. The overwhelming majority of people in Israel – Palestine and in all of our countries do not support war and do not support the policies and continual escalation of confrontation and militarism that feed it.

For war to continue it requires the overwhelming reasonable majority of citizens in Israel and Palestine – and around the world – to sit back and do nothing. To make it end, we need to **stand up and take effective, direct and constructive action.**

Below are a series of recommendations for the people of Palestine and Israel, and all of us around the world. It is not an exhaustive list. If you have more ideas please add your own. Share these with others.

And – most importantly: **take action.**

The values this global call to action is based upon:

Values matter. They express who we are, what we believe in, and the world we want to live in. When war and violence happen we often feel the need to express our solidarity with those affected. This is natural. In this current moment our hearts go out to **all** the people of Palestine and Israel – all Palestinians, all Israelis, all Jews, all Muslims, all Christians, all seculars, all children, all parents,

all grand parents, all women, all men, all those affected by the violence, all those fighting – for freedom, for protecting their people, for ending occupation.

Too often, however, this falls into an ‘us’ vs ‘them’ or ‘weighting’ of suffering. We ask one thing of you. This call is based upon one single and fundamental principle: **all the people of Palestine and Israel deserve to live lives in dignity, free from fear and the threat and reality of violence.** Deep down we know this. Deep down we believe in and agree with this. Let us have the courage to say it.

This call refuses to accept the immaturity and illegitimacy of calls that believe that the rights of one can be achieved at the point of denying the rights of another. **All** the people of Palestine and Israel deserve to live lives with the full enjoyment of their human rights, free from threat and reality of attack, free from governments and authorities which promote constant messages of war, violence, hatred and aggression and which continuously ‘blame’ the absence of peace on the failures of the other side while waging war – through missile attacks, suicide attacks, settlement expansion, and hate media and hate speeches.

The reasonable majority of the people of Palestine and Israel – the reasonable majority of the world – want to be able to live in peace – for ourselves, for our children, and for *their* selves, and *their* children. The reasonable majority want an end to war, and end to violence, and an end to the occupation.

We therefore call upon every peace activist and every citizen, human being, journalist and politician to call – and take *immediate action* – for an end to all violence, on all sides, and to refuse to accept the illegitimate and dishonest rhetoric of ‘legitimate of defence’ to excuse belligerent acts in a context where the cycle of violence is bringing suffering to all people and all sides.

We call upon every peace activist and every citizen, human being, journalist and politician to express their support and solidarity for the *people* of BOTH Palestine and Israel, and to use this moment where once again irresponsible and illegitimate ‘leadership’ and bankrupt policies of war and violence have brought us back to war, to launch a true, sustained, and unrelenting movement of the people of Palestine and Israel – with support from the people of the world – for a just and lasting peace and end to occupation.

What practically can I / we do?

Here is a list of 18 ideas. You may not agree with or resonate with all of them. You may agree and resonate powerfully with some. Please look over them. Think about them. Add your own. Share them further, and, most of all **please take direct, effective and constructive action.**

- 1. ACTIVELY EXPRESS SOLIDARITY AND SUPPORT WITH ALL ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS:** *Express your support, sympathy, compassion and solidarity with **all** the people of Israel-Palestine and for all of those suffering, as well as for all of those waging the conflict. Base your calls for peace and an end to violence and occupation on a fundamental respect for human beings and human dignity, while refusing all legitimisation and support for violence, occupation, and actions which deny and denigrate human dignity, freedom and security for all*
- 2. TAKE DIRECT ACTION:** *Identify immediate actions you can take which create a **public, collective force for peace** and which make the continuation of violence and war unacceptable for all sides. The list below includes some of the actions you can take, but it needs you to take them, and to get others involved as well!*
- 3. PUBLIC MANIFESTATIONS & PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS:** *Facebook, twitter, and private sentiment or discussions with those around us aren't enough. Making publicly visible your direct opposition to the continuing violence is critical. People need to see it. They need to see the **numbers** of those opposing illegitimate actions of war and violence. Even if you start as one person in a central square, the yard of your school, the streets of Israel and Palestine, in front of the European Parliament, in front of Palestinian and Israeli Embassies, in front of the White House or your own national government, in public parks – more people will join you. Prepare clear and powerful signs and messages that call upon an end to violence and peace for all the people of Israel-Palestine. Organise with your friends, networks, peace movements and organisations in your community. Get your family members to join and take time to convince listen to and respect those who are sceptical or actively composed. Act with dignity and treat people with dignity, and, if possible, get them to come along and join with you.*
- 4. MAKE VISIBLE YOUR CALL FOR PEACE FOR ALL PEOPLE OF PALESTINE & ISRAEL:** *Right now, in your offices, in your school, in the windows of your home facing the street, put up a peace sign. Put up joint flags of Palestine & Israel. Put up signs calling for peace for all the people of Israel and Palestine. Be creative, but let people see, know and think about what you're calling for.*
- 5. JOIN / DEPLOY ISRAELI, PALESTINIAN AND INTERNATIONAL NONVIOLENT PEACE TEAMS AND PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS:** *We need to **physically stop the violence and war from being able to happen**. If 1000 internationals – of many ages, many backgrounds, many genders, many faiths, many professions, travel to Israel and Palestine as nonviolent peace teams to join the people of Israel and Palestine and to physically be present to stop the violence, it will have an impact. And the key is to travel to both Israel and Palestine – to show that we are united with all people and against all violence. Anyone*

*who calls for an end to violence against Palestinians but doesn't also call for an end to violence against Israelis will be enabling and supporting the continuing logic and discourse fuelling the violence. Anyone who calls for an end to violence against Israelis but doesn't also call for an end to violence against and occupation of Palestinians will be enabling and supporting the continuing logic and discourse fuelling the violence. As human beings we need to be capable of more. **Civilian, unarmed, nonviolent peace teams** could include:*

- a. **Israeli Peace Teams to Gaza:** Israelis doing all they can to cross over to Gaza or going to the border and being physically present in solidarity with the people of Gaza and all Palestinians to end the violence.*
- b. **Palestinian Peace Teams to Israel:** Palestinians doing all they can to cross over to Israel or going to the border and being physically present in solidarity with the people of Israel to end the violence.*
- c. **International Peace Teams to Israel & Palestine:** International Peace Teams and individuals opposing the violence and supporting peace should travel to Israel and Palestine **immediately** to be physically present and prevent further violence, show solidarity, and help in rebuilding. Peace teams can enter Gaza through Egypt to express solidarity and support for the people of Palestine and use their physical presence to prevent those making war being able to use violence. Peace teams should do all they can to enter Israel to express solidarity and support for the people of Israel and use their physical presence to prevent those making war being able to use violence.*

In travelling to Israel and Palestine, listen to and respect the personal stories of suffering, experience, and perspectives of all people, no matter how challenging and difficult it is. If you truly believe in peace, social justice, human rights, dignity, freedom, and an end to the occupation for all the people of Israel and Palestine, transcending the logic of war, violence and demonization is critical. If people are going to take the steps for peace it is not enough to tell them they're "wrong". That will only deepen the conflict. Listen. Show respect. Build real relationships. And, at the same time: struggle, actively, with every fibre of your human and more dignity and intelligence, against all forms and manifestations of violence, dehumanisation, and hatred – but do so through deep, deep humanity and respecting the dignity of all people.

*Even if the violence / fighting stops, still go. Much needs to be done to rebuild, and to show solidarity, **real** solidarity with Israelis and Palestinians if we are to force the cycle of violence, war and occupation to end.*

- 6. Mobilise Leadership for Peace from Governments and Political Institutions and Inter-Governmental Organisations Around the World – including your national government, and state/provincial and local authorities:**
Directly call, write letters to, or meet with your elected representatives demanding and calling upon them to call for an immediate end to violence on and by all sides, and to call for a just and lasting peace for all the people of Israel and Palestine. Take the time to meet and have respectful discussion with them, but let them know how important you feel this is. Help them to discuss and explore practical, concrete actions. Work to organise emergency meetings / discussions of the situation in Israel – Palestine in your local community / local authorities, town halls, provincial and state assemblies and parliaments, and national parliaments. Take care about the language of the calls and ensure it shows authentic empathy with all sides together with courageous and determined calls for peace.
- 7. Organise & Mobilise with Concerned Citizens. You / We are not alone. Make our numbers grow:** *Organise meetings at your university, in your synagogue, mosque, church, temple, local community centre, or within your organisation / company. If you are in university / school as a student or teacher/professor, speak with your students, teacher, professor and organise a space to discuss what's happening in Israel – Palestine now. Show respect and give space for all views and opinions. Dialogue based upon respect. Focus people's thoughts also on constructive action and what can be done. Look for and share stories of what citizens have done to prevent and stop violence, from the Concerned Citizens movement in Kenya to soldiers in the First World War who stopped fighting over Christmas to come together. Spaces / forums for discussion need to be created for people to voice their opinions and be able to see what and how they can contribute through constructive action.*
- 8. Call upon respected social, cultural, civic, religious, sports and other leaders and celebrities to call for peace:** *Especially in Israel and Palestine, reach out to and discuss / engage with people who are respected and seen as leaders within communities to raise their voices for peace. Internationally, get concerned religious, social, political, cultural, artistic and sports leaders to begin calling for peace and calling upon their governments and the governments and people of Israel and Palestine to take immediate action.*
- 9. Reach out to Israelis and Palestinians and Jews and Muslims more broadly in your community, and start inter-community dialogues and joint action for peace if possible:**
Meet with local Jewish and Muslim, Israeli and Palestinian religious and civic leadership in your community / country. Show respect. Hear their points of views. Discuss with them, and try to build upon common ground and common needs to call for peace. Support inter-community dialogue and

joint action. Bring in other religious, civic and/or community leaders trusted by each or both communities if this will help.

- 10. Write Opinion Pieces, Articles, and Letters to your local, national and international newspapers and to elected authorities and political party leaders. Call in to radio and television shows. Speak with friends in the media and encourage them to report professionally and responsibly, and focus also on calls for peace:** *Write pieces to the local media or call into radio and television shows to share your opinions and make visible the global calls of millions for peace and the suffering of Palestinians and Israelis, as well as their courageous actions for peace and to end violence. Write letters to your elected leaders and share these with your media, on your web pages, blogs, Facebook pages and more. Also call upon media and journalists to report on issues professionally, responsibly and without bias, and to focus also on what's being done for peace. Question and challenge the rhetoric of 'defence' and 'responding' being used. This does not reflect the empirical evidence on the ground and violence by any and all sides is only fuelling and escalating violence. It is illegitimate and media and journalists should not be sustaining the rhetoric and discourses that support it.*

- 11. If you are a journalist – take pride in your work and report honestly and authentically:** *Media in Israel-Palestine and around the world play an important role in the conflict. If you are a journalist or media institution, please:*
 - a. Responsibly and honestly report on what is happening. Refrain from 'framing' the conflict along the ideological lines of any 'one' side. Make visible honestly the suffering of all sides and impact of the violence.*

 - b. Focus also on what's being done for peace. Report on actions within Israel and Palestine globally and expressions of solidarity and support between the communities / people.*

 - c. Refuse to report and carry rhetoric of 'leaders' and actors sustaining or promoting violence or demonization of the other. Media around the world have done this responsibly in times of crisis, recognising that turning themselves into mouthpieces of hatred and inflaming of violence impacts the context and what's happening on the ground and is not professional reporting.*

 - d. For newspapers in Israel & Palestine: print a shared cover story on the front page in Hebrew and Arabic calling for an end to violence and urging all people to unite for peace and take direct action to end the war and occupation*

- 12. For Peace Workers, Peace Researchers, Peace Activists and Concerned Social and Civic Leaders around the world:** *We have a tremendous responsibility and tremendous opportunity. Between all of us we have extraordinary networks, contacts and ability to reach people at societal levels and in government, media, diplomacy and elsewhere. People involved in peacebuilding globally should be preparing shared messages and a call for peace in Israel-Palestine, and a call supporting the people of Israel and Palestine to directly bring about a change in the dynamics of the conflict and actively engage for peace. Nobel Peace Prize winners and people with legitimacy with Israelis and Palestinians should travel to Israel and Palestine to meet and discuss with people and organise joint events to plan direct action and engagements for peace.*

- 13. Visit diplomatic representatives of Israel and Palestine to listen to their issues, hear their concerns, and discuss with them your resolution and calls for an end to violence and peace:** *Engage directly with diplomats and representatives at every level. Organise dialogues as well as direct vigils and public presence in front of embassies and diplomatic representation calling for an immediate end to the violence and military aggression on all sides. Engage in direct dialogue on what can be done and hold actors and diplomatic representatives accountable.*

- 14. Call upon and provide active support for soldiers / combatants on all sides to refuse to fight and to courageously stand up for the freedom and rights of their peoples to live in peace and to not commit crimes of war and crimes against humanity against other human beings:** *Israeli and Palestinian combatants and fighters need to be actively supported to refuse to carry out acts of violence and to stand up as responsible leaders and members of their communities to call for peace. Any fool and coward can kill. Any fool and coward can follow illegitimate orders to kill. What is needed is real honour, real dignity, and real courage. Actively reach out to soldiers and combatants – as their friends, their mothers, their fathers, their grandparents, their children, their husbands and wives, and support them to refuse to be part of violence and to make the courageous choice to stop fighting and work honestly for real peace and security for all the people of Israel and Palestine.*

- 15. Create a Facebook page to help support and make visible people's actions, provide up-dates, encourage engagement, and show how people can become involved!**

And, in the immediate short term as well as the medium and longer run:

- 16. Demand political leaders in Israel and Palestine, the broader Middle East, and the world, who refuse to continue the psychology and criminality of war, violence, aggression and support for global weapons industries and call for responsible, accountable political leadership with the courage to address conflicts intelligently, effectively and responsibly through peaceful means:** Citizens in Israel-Palestine, the broader Middle East and world-wide need to take accountability for governance of our lives and countries and refuse to accept political leaders who continue to promote war and violence as ways of addressing serious challenges to our communities and human security, and who continue to pedal and serve the interests of weapons manufacturers and a global weapons industry which now exceeds 1.7 trillion dollars in expenditures annually and produces enough bullets each year to kill every human being on the planet twice. Leaders who deny the historical crimes and atrocities done to others, leaders who deny the crimes their own societies have done, leaders who continue to promote infantile deceit blaming lack of peace on others instead of taking responsibility themselves, leaders who continue to belittle all of us and our society and dignity by promoting demonization and hatred, are not true leaders. While they should have all rights and freedoms as human beings and citizens, they should also be accountable to the law and to the court of public opinion and removed from office. We all deserve better, and we all need to take action and stand up for it.
- 17. Call for an international investigation:** *An independent international investigation with representatives from Israel, Palestine, and internationally should investigate the latest round of violence, listen fully to people on all sides, provide an exact actual account of the sequence of actions, and provide recommendations on how to prevent further violence. War escalators on all 'sides' continue to misinform and mislead their populations. An independent, accountable, transparent and responsible authority needs to present an accurate record of what happened to inform citizens in Israel and Palestine who have a right to know, should hear their stories and experiences, and should collect and make visible recommendations for immediate action for a real peace.*
- 18. Get involved even if the fighting stops! Peace is – quite literally – up to you and all of us!** *The current round of violence is part of a much larger cycle. Our attention can't be raised only when there's fighting. Peace – real, just, lasting peace for all Israelis and Palestinians, and an end to the occupation – is possible. It is not a 'distant hope.' It is not a 'naïve delusion'. The only thing allowing the war, violence and occupation to continue are the bankrupt and illegitimate policies of war mongering, hate promotion, and settlement expansion. Israel, Palestine, the region, and the entire world deserve better. We must recognise, however, after all these years: politicians and political leadership – particularly if left on their own –*

will not provide it. It will take the reasonable, social majority rising up – with dignity, with intelligence, drawing upon the deep values and cultures of our people and traditions, and working to abolish and end once and for all this legacy of war, violence, atrocity, hatred, fear, demonization, and dehumanisation of the other, and create a better future for all the people of Israel and Palestine.

If you can phrase these ideas in a way that's more exciting, more inspiring, more empowering and better able to reach people and encourage them to action please do. If you have ideas of your own, please add them. If you believe some of the ideas here are important and can help people find ways of acting, please feel free to share it, post it, mail it, re-print it. If you can, please also translate this text into Arabic and Hebrew to be accessible to more people in Israel and Palestine and the broader Middle East and globally.

Dedicated to all the people of Israel and Palestine. Dedicated to a future in Israel and Palestine without war and violence. Dedicated to the knowledge that if I, you, any and all of us want this to happen, it's up to us.

Dedicated to taking action to stop the violence in Israel and Palestine and work for a real, lasting and just peace.