

The Gaza Strip

Israel-based civil society and human rights organizations call for a ceasefire

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We, the undersigned Israel-based civil society and human rights organizations, call for an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and demand the immediate release of hostages held in the Gaza Strip. An immediate ceasefire will prevent further loss of civilian lives and facilitate access to vital aid for Gaza to address the unprecedented humanitarian catastrophe there.

In more than 120 days of war in Gaza, following Hamas's egregious attack on October 7 which killed some 1,200 Israelis and internationals, we have witnessed Israeli bombardments and siege policy causing unfathomable death and destruction in the Gaza Strip.

According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, some 27,000 people have been killed, over 66,000 people have been injured, and thousands more are still buried under the rubble. The healthcare system has been almost totally decimated by military assaults, electricity blackouts, the enormous number of medical staff killed or displaced, and shortages of medications and medical equipment. Only 14 out of 36 hospitals are partially operational and are on the verge of collapse due to extreme overload and lack of supplies. Food supply and clean drinking water are lacking throughout Gaza, with the entire population at imminent risk of famine and dehydration.

Some 1.7 million people - about 75% of the population - have been displaced. IDP shelters are overcrowded and lack basic conditions, with extreme shortages of food, water, and other necessities. Large areas in the Strip are no longer habitable. Thousands of homes have been heavily damaged or destroyed by Israeli bombardments, while critical civil infrastructure, public buildings, cultural institutions, places of worship, and heritage sites lie in ruins.

The shortage in supplies and the active hostilities prevent an effective humanitarian response. Some necessary humanitarian items and medical equipment are being blocked from entry by Israel. Heavy rains, cold weather, and extreme overcrowding in tent encampments and shelters, have significantly increased the incidence of illness and disease. The distribution of what little aid is entering is significantly hindered by the lack of safe access within the Strip. Nowhere in Gaza is safe for civilians.

We thus call on all parties to reach an immediate ceasefire and we call upon Israel to allow unfettered entry and delivery of humanitarian aid and goods into and throughout Gaza, as directed to do so by the International Court of Justice. Hamas must unconditionally release all people taken hostage on October 7. We call on the international community to uphold its legal obligation to restore respect for international humanitarian law and protect civilians. The international community must ensure that all those responsible for grave violations of international humanitarian and human rights law be held accountable. These steps are vital for ensuring human rights and

security for Israelis and Palestinians alike.

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Solidarity of Nations - Achvat Amim | Mothers Against Violence Israel | Amnesty International Israel | Isha L'isha Haifa Feminist Center | The School for Peace | Bimkom - Planners for Planning Rights | B'Tselem - The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories | Gisha - Legal Center for Freedom of Movement | The Association for Civil Rights Israel (ACRI) | Parents Against Child Detention | HaMoked: Center for the Defence of the Individual | Zazim - Community Action | Haqel - In Defense of Human Rights | Yesh Gvul | Yesh Din | This Is Not An Ulpan | Combatants for Peace | Machsom Watch | Looking the Occupation in the Eye | Standing Together | Social Workers for Peace and Welfare | Ir Amim | Akevot Institute for Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Research | Emek Shaveh | Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality | Israeli Palestinian Bereaved Families for Peace | PsychoActive - Mental Health Professionals for Human Rights | Jordan Valley Activists | New Profile - The Movement to Demilitarize Israeli Society | Policy Working Group | Rabbis for Human Rights | Physicians for Human Rights Israel | Your Neighbor As Yourself | Breaking the Silence | Peace Now | Torat Tzedek | Green Olive Collective

P.S.

• B'Tselem. 07 February 2024:

https://www.btselem.org/press_releases/20240207_israel_based_civil_society_and_human_rights_organizations_call_for_a_ceasefire