



NCOE STATEMENT CONCERNING PALESTINE & ISRAEL CONFLICT

The National Council of Elders strongly condemns the ongoing assault of Israeli airstrikes and ground forces, with U.S. made-armaments, against Palestinian communities and essential communications infrastructure, including the 12-story building in Gaza that housed the offices of the Associated Press and Al Jazeera. Gaza is the most densely populated area in the world, and has been subjected to a deadly blockade since 2011, which has restricted the people's access to many essentials.¹

In the current assault, close to 231 Palestinians have been killed, 65 of them children (as of 5/20/2021), with an unknown number wounded and an estimated 65,000 now homeless, since hundreds of neighborhoods have been rendered uninhabitable by the bombings. Israel has reported 12 dead, including two children. One life lost is one too many.

We call upon the Biden administration to intervene immediately to halt this intensifying war against the Palestinians, who have been forced to defend themselves against a system of relentless dispossession of their homes and land since 1948. We denounce the repeated U.S. statement that "Israel has the right to defend itself" as an egregiously immoral stance in the face of a war in which Israelis are wielding overwhelming colonizing power backed by U.S. tax dollars and weaponry, while Palestinians must fight to stay alive under the repressive, violent regime of Israeli occupation. We demand an immediate end to this war, and an end to the seizure and takeover of Palestinian settlements.

We call upon the Biden administration to stand with people around the world who are demanding a resolution of this crisis that every day brings greater misery and suffering to Palestinians and Israelis alike. Palestinians must be free. Their right to their ancestral land and self-determination must be affirmed. They deserve protection in accordance with International Laws. They must be full and equal participants in the negotiation of their independence and statehood. The Israeli occupation of Palestine must be brought to an end.

Rachele Agoyo ~ Dorothy Aldridge ~ Dorsey Blake ~ Lewis Brandon, III ~ Candie Carawan
Mandy Carter ~ Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz ~ Marian Wright Eldeman ~ John Fife ~ Aljosie Aldrich Harding
Gloria Aneb House ~ Shea Howell ~ Dolores Huerta ~ Phil Hutchins ~ Joyce Hobson Johnson
~ Nelson Johnson ~ Frank Joyce ~ James Lawson Jr. ~ Philip Lawson ~ Sherri Maurin
Catherine Meeks ~ Eugene "Gus" Newport ~ Suzanne Pharr ~ Lyn Pyle ~ Bernice Johnson Reagon
Frances Reid ~ Kathy "Wan Povi" Sanchez ~ Charles Sherrod ~ Shirley Sherrod ~ G. Zoharah Simmons
Louie Vitale ~ Hollis Watkins ~ Junius Williams. ~ Bob Wing ~ Janet Wolf

¹ Gaza has a population of two million living on a strip of land that is 356 square miles. These are the people and their descendants who were driven from their home in 1948, and have been denied permission by Israel to return and stripped of their property by Israeli law.

www.nationacouncilofelders.org

We are veterans of a long struggle for social justice in our nation and peace in the world. We are the National Council of Elders and stand alongside legions of elders who work to resist oppression and build dreams of new worlds. Our commitment is to accompany younger 21st-century leaders in their effort to bring a greater measure of justice, equality, and peace to our country and world.