



Kairos Palestine statement on the war on Gaza

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**If I go forth into the field,
behold, the slain with the sword!
And if I enter into the city,
behold, those who are sick with famine!
Yes, both the prophet and the priest go
about into a land
that they know not.**

Jeremiah 14:18

The war on Gaza again, but this time it started from Gaza. It has caused great suffering and destruction in Israel. Many see it as an unjust war against Israel. But the question that every human being, and every seeker of peace and justice, must ask is: Why did this war start?

We all say, No, to the War. We all say, Yes, to peace, and to working for a just and final solution to an existing conflict and to the injustice that has been imposed on the Palestinian people for more than 70 years. Israel does not see the Palestinian people as having any right to exist, and the international community is too weak to implement its decisions to find a just and final solution.

We all mourn and console all the victims on both sides of the conflict. A human being is a human being, both Israeli and Palestinian, and every human being is dear in the eyes of God, and in the eyes of his family, relatives, and loved ones.

No to war, yes to a just and final peace.

What is the reason for this sudden war that started from Gaza?

The immediate cause of the war was the formation of the extreme right-wing Israeli government that allowed and encouraged the attacks on Al-Aqsa Mosque, and challenged the religious feelings of Muslims and Christians, despite the successive ultimatums and warnings that came from Gaza, Palestinian leaders, and other global religious and political leaders. This same government has also allowed the spread of settlers throughout occupied Palestine, from north to south, wreaking havoc on the land, attacking Palestinians, killing them and confiscating their lands, under the watch and protection of the Israeli occupation army.

As for the root causes driving the war, they are the permanent state of terror that we Palestinians live in daily from the rule and tyranny of the Israeli occupation army, and the absolute insistence by successive Israeli

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governments, especially this government, that there is no Palestinian state, and that the Palestinian people have no right to self-determination. And all the consequences that arise from that.

This is in addition to the stifling siege of Gaza (two million people in an area not exceeding 360 km²). Since 2007 until today, the people of Gaza have been living in a large open prison that lacks all humane conditions for living.

This war is a reaction and answer to all of that. This war is a demand for Israeli and international recognition of the existence of the Palestinian people and their rights like all other peoples. It is a demand for justice and freedom. It is a demand for independence in a recognized state with Arab Jerusalem as its capital.

This war is a word to the rulers of Israel that weapons do not protect or provide safety. Weapons only cause death. They do not bring life to anyone. We do not want death, but life. We want freedom, justice and independence. We say to you now what we said in our 2009 Kairos Document, *Moment of Truth*: “Our future and [Israel's] future are one. Either the cycle of violence that destroys both of us or peace that will benefit both.” We also reiterate what the President of Colombia has said in response to the current war: “The only way for Israeli children to sleep in peace is for Palestinian children to sleep in peace.”

We all cry for everyone who died, was injured, or was captured. We have been crying for more than seventy years. Refugees in all parts of the world are asking to return. In your prisons, Israel, there are thousands of political prisoners asking for their freedom. There are Palestinians who have been forcibly displaced, homes you have destroyed, homes you raided day and night, and in which you instilled terror.

This war came to say, it is time for everyone to wake up and know the truth about what is happening in Palestine and Israel, that Israel has settled in a land that belongs to the people of Palestine and has deprived the people of Palestine of their freedom. This situation needs to be corrected. Correcting it is not difficult. International law and international standards are acceptable to the Palestinians. Let's agree on it.

This war came to say that weapons do not protect, and the strong who underestimate the weak will not protect themselves nor will they find security. Safe hearts are safe strongholds. Palestinian hearts, if their full freedom, dignity, and state are returned to them, are your only protection.

If your hearts are pure, your crowds will no longer say, “Death to the Arabs,” and the slogan of some of your representatives in the Knesset will no longer be, “No, to peace with the Arabs, and death to the Arabs.”

It is time for the rulers and friends of Israel to understand that the peace of the country, and the peace of Israel, is the peace of the Palestinian people. Enough of supporting the blatant injustice being done to us.

Do not think that your comprehensive and destructive war on Gaza is the solution. Do not think that your ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians in Gaza is the solution! We are people like you. We want life like you. We want all our rights like you.

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We are on this earth only by the grace of God, not by the grace of any human being. And we will remain in it. Come to an understanding. Come to the path of your correct and permanent security, and our correct and permanent security. We all live in a sacred land, ours and yours. Let us walk in God's ways, together abandon all violence, resort to the good word, begin a new future, and build a new land.

Oh God, teach us your ways so we can walk in them.

Together we can build peace that will be peace for the region and the world.

**Turn away from evil and do good;
seek peace and pursue it.
The eyes of the LORD are toward the righteous
and his ears toward their cry.
Psalm 34:14-15**

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