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Appeal for Immediate Cessation of Hostilities in Lebanon and Gaza

- Homepage -

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Dear Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Israel, Ambassadors, and Foreign Ministers of the Security Council, and Leaders of Hamas and Hezbollah:

The undersigned individuals and organisations appeal to you to immediately cease hostilities in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip and to commence negotiations leading to a just diplomatic and political solution to the problems of the Middle East. We appeal to all parties in this crisis to abide by all UN resolutions, including Israel to leave occupied land and Hezbollah to be disarmed.

The pursuit of a military solution to problems created by an overwhelming perception of injustice to non-Israelis could result in Hezbollah actually being strengthened, with hostility to Israel vastly magnified. Moreover, this hostility is on the rise worldwide due to the massive bombing in Lebanon in which civilians are the vast majority of victims and the infrastructure of the country is being ruined. This is unacceptable to the world community. Condemnation is also directed to Hezbollah for directing missiles on towns and villages in Israel. Bombing and missiles on civilian targets creates a savage condition that guarantees increased hostility and hatred.

A project to destroy Hezbollah or other opposing forces by military means is unrealistic in the long-term, and most likely would achieve the opposite effect. Similarly, we urge leaders of Hamas and Hezbollah to understand that efforts to destroy the State of Israel cannot succeed, and statements to that effect must be ended if negotiations to end the conflict and improve the lives of people in the entire region are to succeed.

The current policies to address the problems in the Middle East are, in our view, terribly inadequate, mired in the past, and self-defeating. We urge you to cease hostilities immediately and to commence a process of negotiation towards a just solution, including the assurance that the Middle East becomes a nuclear weapons free zone. A rapid decision to proceed with diplomacy rather than force would be welcomed by the entire world community, and it could be an important milestone on the journey to liberation from the violence of the past and the present terror of modern weapons.

On the other side, failure to solve this problem and a continuation of violence poses the terrible risk of escalation that could include even the possibility of nuclear strikes. Such possibilities, coupled with rhetoric of mutual threats, are horrifying. Talk of mutual threats between Israel and Iran is dangerous in the extreme and must cease.

We urge you to seize this historic opportunity, and we look forward to your early response.

Signed:

Pol D'Huyvetter, Friends of the Earth Flanders/For Mother Earth

Doug Mattern, Association of World Citizens,

Dr Mary Wynne-Asford, Past Co-President, IPPNW,

Colin Archer Secy General International Peace Bureau, Geneva

Appeal for Immediate Cessation of Hostilities in Lebanon and Gaza

Bruce K. Gagnon Coordinator, Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space,

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John Johansen-Berg, Chair, Fellowship of Reconciliation (England)
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Peter Cadogan, London Alliance for Local Democracy

Jill Stallard, National Secretary, CND Cymru, UK,

Anna Cheetham, Co-Chair, Leicester Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament,

Michael Sackin, Leicester, UK Jews for Justice for Palestinians,

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