



Pax Christi International

Statement on the increasing International Humanitarian Law violations in the Holy Land

Brussels, October 17th, 2023

Pax Christi International is deeply concerned about the escalation of violence in the Holy Land. We empathise with the people of Israel who are shocked, angered and hurt by the despicable actions of Hamas on 7th October. However, we also believe that revenge is a flawed framework for responding to this heinous crime. Israel is obliged under international law to ensure the wellbeing and safety of the civilian population it controls, such as in Gaza. The price of self-defence cannot be the deaths of more than 3.800 Gazans. **The worsening loss of life, livelihood and habitat demands an immediate and unequivocal commitment to humanitarian intervention and human rights implementation.**

- **Ceasefire:**

We strongly urge all parties involved to immediately implement a ceasefire and end hostilities in a region blighted by conflict for far too long. The ceaseless cycle of violence and misery must stop, making way for the critical pursuit of dialogue, negotiation, and the establishment of a lasting and just peace. We call on President Biden, the EU and European and UK Institutions and governments, as well as the UN Security Council to urge Israel to agree to a ceasefire.

- **Access to Water, Food, Electricity, and Essential Services:**

We urge immediate and full access to fundamental necessities such as water, sustenance, electricity, medical supplies, and other essential services which constitute a fundamental human right. We call on involved parties to uphold the unobstructed access for hospitals, and faith-based and secular humanitarian organisations to provide timely assistance to those in need. An immediate stop to the disruption of these services will prevent further suffering and loss of life.

- **Stop Practices of Terror to Induce Palestinians to Leave Their Land:**

It is crucial to stop any communication and activities that harm, instil fear, or coerce Palestinians to abandon their homes. The displacement of civilians must cease. We call for adherence to international law, including protecting civilians' rights, and eschewing actions that cause harm.

- **Provision of International Protection:**

We demand that the international community act to provide essential protection for the civilian population in Gaza. The deployment of impartial international observers and peacekeepers, and guaranteed humanitarian corridors is necessary to ensure the safety and security of those in peril, thereby fostering a conducive environment for the delivery of crucial humanitarian aid.

Pax Christi International underlines its unwavering commitment to the pursuit of peace, justice, and reconciliation. We stand in solidarity with all those who are suffering due to the continuing violence and urgently demand that the international community, governments, and all stakeholders unite in a resolute pursuit of a just and enduring resolution. Just peace for the people of the Holy Land can only be achieved through candid dialogue, robust cooperation, and an unshakable respect for human rights.