

November 24, 2023

The following statement was supported unanimously by faculty *present* at a recent faculty meeting. It is offered with deep humility and concern deriving from a belief that we must name and take a position while also wishing to recognize and support the disparate voices of our School community.

Statement of the UBC School of Social Work on Israel and Palestine

The UBC School of Social Work is deeply disturbed by the deplorable armed conflict occurring in Israel and Gaza, which is resulting in the senseless killing and maiming of civilians. We condemn Hamas' heinous attack in Israel on October 7th and mourn the loss of innocent lives in Israel. We hold hope for the safe return of the hostages taken.

We unequivocally condemn Israel's disproportionate response to the Hamas' attack in Gaza. We condemn and mourn the killing of vulnerable civilians. We condemn the targeting of hospitals, schools and refugee camps which clearly contravenes international laws. We condemn the intentional blockage of food, water and electricity which constitutes a war crime and crimes against humanity.

The UBC School of Social Work believes in peace, liberation, safety, and justice for everyone, everywhere. We acknowledge this is a long-standing and complex conflict that has caused immense suffering and injustice for millions of people in the region. Therefore, the UBC School of Social Work calls for an **immediate** and permanent ceasefire on humanitarian grounds. We call for an immediate end to human rights violations and international law violations. We believe that Palestinians have the right to live without occupation and to be able to build their independent state, and that Israelis have the right to live with security and without fear. We call for global leadership to work towards peace in this conflict and urge each side towards discussions that address the root of the conflict to protect Palestinian and Israeli civilians from further escalation of violence and catastrophe.

As social workers, we are committed to uphold the values and ethics of our profession. We must unite against racism, antisemitism, and Islamophobia, and uphold the right to freedom, self-determination, and safety for both Palestinians and Israelis.

Now more than ever, we must take great care to remain respectful and compassionate towards each other and to uphold our shared commitment to fostering inclusion, dignity, and human rights.

We stand with all people in Palestine and Israel who yearn for peace, freedom and security.

We encourage members of our School of Social Work community to take action, consistent with our values. Please see the following for 5 concrete things each of us can do:

<https://www.quaker.org.uk/blog/5-solidarity-actions-you-can-take-for-palestine-and-israel-oct-2023>