



Interfaith Communities United For Justice And Peace

817 W. 34th St. Los Angeles, CA 90089

ICUJP@pacbell.net www.icujp.org 213.748.1643

Religious Communities must stop blessing war and violence!

ICUJP Statement on Israel-Gaza Ceasefire – Adopted July, 2014

Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace (ICUJP) expresses its profound grief over the senseless killings that have been occurring with an alarming increase in frequency in Gaza and Israel.

Since April 2002, ICUJP has cried out to all who would listen that "the terrible escalation of violence in Israel-Palestine ... is a clear and bitter testimony to the utter failure of violence as a means to end violence."

ICUJP has consistently rallied against "the big lie behind all killings—whether street gang murders, deaths among Israelis and Palestinians, deaths at the hands of terrorists on September 11 or deaths in Afghanistan [and Iraq, Syria or elsewhere] —the lie behind them all is that the victims deserved to die.

"Our consciences, shaped by the Divine Spirit, proclaim that when life is cheap and disposable anywhere, life becomes cheap and disposable everywhere. Every human being is of sacred worth—both friend and foe. They bear on themselves the image of the Divine."

To date according to medical sources and news reports, there have been more than 200 deaths in Gaza as a result of the most recent Israeli bombings, with more than 1,200 injured. The majority of these deaths and injuries are civilian. There have also been reports of at least one Israeli fatality and several injuries from Palestinian rocket fire.

We agree with Jewish Voice for Peace's (JVP) [call](#) for a ceasefire: "Our unshakeable commitment to freedom and justice for all compels us to acknowledge that this violence has fallen overwhelmingly on Palestinians. And it compels us to affirm that this violence has a root cause: Israel's illegal occupation."

Additionally, as the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) has [said](#): "Peace cannot be negotiated as long as violence ensues, and the region has already suffered far too much bloodshed. Provocation on one side only leads to retaliation from the other, and all efforts must be made to prevent further devastation on either side."

To paraphrase our convener, Rev. George Regas, the sin and evil at the heart of this tragedy is the belief that a child of one side is more precious than the child of the other side. In the words of Rev. Regas, "a reaffirmation of our common humanity and our equality in joy and in pain must be given primacy if there is ever to be peace in our world."

ICUJP echoes the call for a true and lasting ceasefire that must include representation from both sides. We stand by several organizations, including ISNA, American Friends Service Committee, JVP, LA Jews for Peace and others in a call for an immediate ceasefire. We call on the Obama Administration to pressure both sides in this conflict to immediately cease their attacks and to engage in genuine peace talks.