

Tacoma Friends Minute on Conflict in Israel and Gaza

Approved by Meeting for Business January 14, 2024

Tacoma Friends Meeting is grateful to Eugene Friends for sharing their Minute on Conflict in Gaza, which begins:

“Quakers are led by Divine guidance to cherish peace, and to testify against all wars and the use of violence to pursue political ends.”

We join with Eugene Friends and others to bring our Quaker historic peace testimony into living action by upholding the following truths:

- Each person has within them a divine essence. Our shared humanity enables us to recognize and protect this Inner Light.
- Violence will not result in lasting peace or security for anyone in the region.
- Every Israeli and every Palestinian is a victim of this current and violent outbreak which is an outgrowth of ongoing strife from before the British Mandate for Palestine in the 1920s until today. We mourn the losses and suffering that all have endured for decades.
- In humility we admit that the United States has much peace and justice work to do at home, and that our country has helped perpetuate instability in the Middle East through military action and aid, diplomatic pressure, and lack of leadership.

Based on these truths, we call on Palestinian and Israeli leaders and their foreign enablers, including the US government, to recognize the justice behind both Palestinian and Israeli territorial and national claims. Specifically, we call on the United States to:

- Assist in establishing a mutual agreement among the partisan groups so Palestinians and Israelis can live either together or side by side in peace.
- Reject Islamophobia and anti-Semitism both at home and abroad.
- Address polarization and fear through cross-cultural dialogue.

We urgently call for:

- An immediate ceasefire.
- Return of the hostages.
- Ongoing humanitarian aid.
- Help from trauma-informed peace teams.
- A global commitment to finding peaceful ways to resolve conflict.

As individuals at Tacoma Friends we call on each of us to work for understanding, seek opportunity for dialogue, repudiate violence, and remain steadfast in our commitment to peaceful resolution of this and all other conflicts.