

PRESS RELEASE

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Hawai'i Interfaith Call for a Permanent Ceasefire in Gaza

We, faith leaders of Hawai'i, undersigned, are calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza. We live in the Hawaiian Kingdom which has been illegally occupied by the United States since January 17th, 1893. Now over a hundred years later we join the many who call for the de-occupation of Hawai'i, Palestine, and all occupied nations across the world.

We are calling upon Representative Jill Tokuda and Representative Ed Case to support [House Resolution 786](#) "Calling for an immediate de-escalation and cease-fire in Israel and occupied Palestine"; and we are additionally calling upon Senator Brian Schatz and Senator Mazie Hirono to support a Senate counterpart when and if it surfaces. We thank Senator Hirono for being the first congressperson from Hawai'i to publicly call for a ceasefire.

We are calling upon Governor Josh Green and all members of the Hawai'i State House of Representatives and members of the Hawai'i State Senate to support measures which call for an immediate ceasefire including [Senate Resolution 6](#) and [Senate Concurrent Resolution 13](#) "URGING MEMBERS OF HAWAII'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO SUPPORT THE CEASEFIRE IN GAZA RESOLUTION INTRODUCED BY UNITED STATES CONGRESSWOMAN CORI BUSH." We thank Senator Maile Shimabukuro and Senator Mike Gabbard for introducing these resolutions.

The conflict between Israel, Hamas, and other armed groups has taken a devastating toll on civilians. The level of casualties is unprecedented. Nearly 30,000 civilians have been killed since October 7th and the majority of them are women and children. (An additional credible-but-as-yet-unverified 7,000 civilians are "under the rubble" of the northern area of the Gaza Strip and presumed dead. Also, some 68,000 Gazan civilians are in a "wounded" category.) A ceasefire would put a stop to unlawful attacks by all parties, halt the ever-surging death-and-wounded toll in Gaza and enable aid agencies to get life-saving aid, water and medical supplies into the Strip to address the staggering levels of human suffering. It will also allow hospitals to receive life-saving medicines, fuel and equipment they desperately need and a repair to damaged wards. Importantly, a ceasefire would lead imminently to a resolution of the hostage crisis (Israelis taken into Gaza on October 7th; thousands of Palestinian prisoners languishing without legal recourse in Israeli prisons) on both sides.

We reject Settler-Colonial Zionism, the extremist ideology which displaced some 750,000 Palestinians from their homes, towns, and land in 1948-9 plus many thousands more in the

intervening 75 years (many of them, effectively imprisoned via siege/blockade in the Gaza Strip). We condemn all forms of religious violence and intolerance including Islamophobia, anti-semitism, and Christian supremacy.

“Why is it totally acceptable and commendable to resist oppression in other contexts, yet there is a double standard when it comes to Palestinians? Why is every Israeli violence “self defense” while every Palestinian violence “terrorism”? . . . Repeatedly throughout the years, the Palestinian Christian community and the great majority of Muslims have been committed to non-violence and to dialogue. Even in the midst of violence and oppression that we face daily in every aspect in our life.” (Rev. Dr. Munther Issac of Christmas Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bethlehem) We support nonviolence as the de-escalation of violence and we support Palestinians in their rights to defend their land, families, and selves.

As South African Anglican Bishop Desmond Tutu said, “If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.” While we are people of many faiths and cultures, we are united in demanding an immediate and permanent ceasefire for true peace and an end to violence.

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