

FAITH GROUPS JOIN CALL FOR AN ARMS EMBARGO ON ISRAEL

It is with heavy hearts that we compose this letter. At the time of this writing, the Israeli military's ground, naval, and ariel bombardment of Gaza has killed more than 826 Palestinians. The vast majority of these victims were civilians, [according to the United Nations](#). Palestinian rockets and anti-tank fire have killed two Israeli civilians, one Thai migrant worker, and 32 Israeli soldiers (one Israeli soldier has been reported as "missing" by Israel and "captured" by Hamas).

We deplore and condemn the use of violence by anyone, anytime, anywhere. For, each of these casualties is a child of God; each has a name; each has a family; each has a life story that has come to an abrupt and tragic end.

These deaths do not occur in a vacuum. The current onslaught takes place within the context of a seven-year old Israeli and Egyptian imposed blockade of Gaza and forty-seven year old Israeli occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza.

Most of Gaza's residents, moreover, are from families that were driven from their homes in Palestine in 1948, when the state of Israel was created, and have since not been permitted by Israel to return. Those Palestinians and their descendants who did manage to stay in Israel after 1948 are subject to institutionalized discrimination and increasing hostility from right-wing Israelis.

In the face of this oppression, Palestinians everywhere must struggle for their dignity, human rights, and equality. Right now in Gaza, every Palestinian is literally struggling to stay alive.

Israeli aggression against Palestine, both in the past two weeks, and over the past several decades, has been largely enabled by American military aid and international military sales. The US government gives Israel \$3.1 billion a year to purchase the most advanced weaponry in the world. European Union countries, as well as Brazil, India, and Chile have also sold advanced weapons to the Israeli military.

We support efforts to prevent the distribution of weapons to Gaza.

We likewise call for a blockade of weapons to Israel.

We are therefore joining the [six Nobel Peace Laureates](#) and thousands of others in endorsing the [Palestinian call](#) for an arms embargo on Israel. We will continue endorsing this call until the current bloodshed, blockade, occupation, and exile come to an end.

We ask that you [join us in these actions](#) and in continuing to pray for a just peace in Israel/Palestine.

In peace and hope,