



December 8, 2023

THE USA-PALESTINE MENTAL HEALTH NETWORK STATEMENT ON THE GENOCIDE IN GAZA

Israel's genocidal assault on Gaza enters its second month, leaving in its wake over 17,000 innocent dead—including more than 7,000 children—with many times that number suffering grave injury and its entire population enduring the cruel denial of food, water, and fuel. These atrocities as well as those in the West Bank have moved hundreds of thousands of compassionate human beings around the world to gather in non-violent protest, demanding ceasefire and justice for the people of Palestine. We join our comrades and colleagues internationally and in Palestine in calling for a permanent ceasefire as our immediate and number one priority.

Please join us in contacting your government officials, your civil societies, and your professional organizations asking them to support this demand.

In particular, **we call upon all of our mental health organizations** to adopt a principled stand through issuing formal statements endorsing immediate and permanent ceasefire. Military obliteration and forced population transfer are forbidden by international law. Defense of the people of Palestine against these violations is consistent with the commitment to anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and anti-colonialist positions which are already commonplace in our organizations' proclaimed missions. Excellent statements in support of the people of Palestine have been issued by the American Arab, Middle Eastern, and North African Psychological Association and the Board of Directors of Psychoanalysis for Social Responsibility. Yet the obvious devastation of the civilian population of Gaza has been passed over in silence by the majority of our mental health organizations. Indeed, many Mental Health Organizations have issued statements in support of

Israel while failing even to mention the staggering loss of life by Palestinian civilians and the horrific asymmetry in the number of dead (Israelis have lost 1200; Palestinians have lost 17,000).

We urge you to locate others within your organization, draft demands, challenge your organization's leadership team, and speak out. You can take actions such as these:

- 1) Contact your professional organization asking for a formal call for ceasefire.
- 2) Organize a petition within your organization's membership asking the leadership to put out a statement calling for ceasefire.
- 3) Cancel in protest membership in organizations that fail to call for ceasefire.
- 4) Don't attend conferences held by offending organizations--whether they are held in the US or in Israel.
- 5) Don't participate in or publish scholarship within offending organizations.
- 6) Don't purchase training materials by offending organizations.
- 7) Continue to participate in membership and conferences with Psychoanalysis for Social Responsibility and American Arab, Middle Eastern, and North African Psychological Association and other organizations that have called for ceasefire.

And finally, do not hesitate to contact us for support with your action plan.

Using our potential as active agents for justice has never been more urgent.

In solidarity,

The Steering Committee
The USA-Palestine Mental Health Network
www.usapalmhn.org