



## **From the Religious Diversity Centre in Aotearoa New Zealand**

16 October 2023

### **Responding to the gravity of the situation in Palestine and Israel**

Acknowledging the gravity of the situation in Palestine and Israel underlines the importance of the work of the Religious Diversity Centre :

‘to foster understanding and appreciation and deeper relationships among the diverse religious and secular communities in Aotearoa New Zealand’.

That Hamas and the State of Israel are both sanctioning extreme violent action directed at everyone, including civilians, including children, needs to be urgently called out and challenged and alternatives fostered.

Here in Aotearoa New Zealand, the Religious Diversity Centre encourages us all to pull together in support of the victims of the violence in Israel and in Gaza, and in support of their families and communities here in our midst.

As we here in Aotearoa New Zealand encounter different perspectives on the situation can we remember not to conflate Hamas with all Palestinians or the State of Israel with all Jews and Judaism itself; can we listen respectfully to one another to more deeply understand each other, and together come to a fuller understanding of the situation for Israel and Palestine. This will enable us to act together in the work of challenging any and all acts of violence.

We call on all in Israel and Gaza to recognise and honour each other’s human dignity and to acknowledge the possibility and hope of a peaceful future for all in the region.

We appeal particularly for the children. Children, both Israeli and Palestinian have died and Gaza’s population is 50% children.

Together we support peace for all in Israel and Palestine, a deep, lasting, and just peace that addresses core systemic issues of the conflict, from Palestinian rights to freedom and self-determination, to Israel’s right to safety and security. We pray for the same.

*Signed on behalf of the RDC:*

*Jocelyn Armstrong and Dr Jenny Te Paa Daniel*

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