

Letter of Statement

Cities are not targets! Populated areas are not targets! Anger at or fear of terrorists, unjust governments, or warriors of any kind is no excuse for the wanton slaughter of innocent noncombatants.

In August 2006, Mayors for Peace condemned both the indiscriminate firing of thousands of rockets toward populated areas in Israel by Hezbollah and the disproportionate bombardment of populated areas in Lebanon by Israeli armed forces.

Today, with Hamas firing only one tenth as many rockets as Hezbollah and with Israel concentrating firepower comparable to that used in Lebanon on an area ten times smaller, i.e. the Gaza Strip, even-handed criticism is no longer appropriate. Our condemnation of indiscriminate rocket fire stands. We call on Hamas to immediately halt all violent attacks. However, to simply condemn the disproportionate use of explosive force is, under these circumstances, grossly inadequate. We are appalled by the Israeli Government's lack of humanity and demand immediate international intervention.

We demand an immediate halt to all use of explosive force in and from the Gaza Strip; a guarantee of immediate access for humanitarian aid to assist the Palestinian civilian population; an internationally monitored ceasefire; and negotiations involving all parties to begin as soon as the ceasefire has taken effect, as called for in UN Security Council Resolution 1860. We are convinced that the search for a political solution through dialogue and respect for human rights are the most effective avenues towards peace.

January 16, 2009

The Conference of Mayors for Peace

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