



27th October, 2023

Open Letter to the International Community of Psychological Societies,

The New Zealand Psychological Society Rōpū Mātai Hinengaro o Aotearoa are writing to express our deep concern about the invasion of Palestine. The situation in Gaza is catastrophic, with many people facing extreme physical and psychological trauma, hardship and suffering.

Based in the psychological communities' absolute rejection of violence and international aggression as ineffective in resolving problems on any level, we urge our psychological societies to voice their concerns to their government and call for an end to the attack on Gaza. We also call on the leaders of Hamas to return all hostages to the safety of their families.

We are deeply concerned about the impact of the forced displacement of Palestinian people, the bombardment of civilians in their homes, workplaces, and places of education and places of worship. We are concerned that Israel has imposed a siege on Gaza and cut off access to basic human rights in direct violation of international law. We know the impact of invasion and war on innocent civilians and future generations.

We agree with the United Nation's call for an immediate end to the violence towards Gaza and their expressed concerns over the humanitarian crisis in the region. An immediate ceasefire is needed to enable Palestinians to access physical, psychological and spiritual safety.

We call for immediate provisions of food, shelter, water, power and medical supplies.

We call for a ceasefire so that the dead can be buried, and the injured healed. We call for peace so that babies can be born in safety, mothers can nurse their children, and families can mourn.

We call for an end to the bombardments - so that silence can prevail allowing spiritual leaders to provide responses that are crucial to healing.

UN agencies have highlighted that children, pregnant women, and the elderly are the most vulnerable. Nearly half of the population of Gaza are children. As researchers and psychologists, we know that the impact of unhealed trauma is generational.

We call for an end to the occupation of Palestine for the last 75 years.

We are aware that the Israeli attack on Gaza is supported by other international communities. We call on these communities to withdraw their support and provide aid, not warships, in order to prevent further human rights abuses.

Our joint voices have the potential to raise awareness and challenge decision makers to consider the lives of those affected by this crisis, and to reduce further trauma on the most vulnerable.

We urge you to act, to call for the release of all hostages, and for an end to the invasion of Gaza and the apartheid of Palestine.

Signed:

The New Zealand Psychological Society Executive.