



world without wars and violence

International Humanist Organisation
www.worldwithoutwars.org

Regarding the situation in Israel and Palestine

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Once more the Middle East, centred on modern day Israel and Palestine, is in a situation of war and we find it again necessary to take a position.

We base our position on the following points that seem relevant to us:

1. Although this conflict may be about control of territory, there are outside interests involved who are making large amounts of money at the expense of human lives.
2. Those throwing missiles at each other's territories are violent criminals and need to be dealt with as such in international courts.
3. The future of any territory must be decided by those who live in that territory and this process must not be interfered with by outside interests.
4. If the situation were reversed and Israelis, instead of Palestinians, were barricaded into open air prisons such as the Gaza strip and the West Bank Western Powers and the United Nations would not tolerate it.

In this light we take the following position:

1. We support neither the government and military of Israel nor the administrators and military of the Palestinians. Instead we support the civilians on both sides who want neither war nor violence in their communities.
2. We call for an immediate ceasefire and progressive disarmament of both sides (conventional and nuclear in the case of Israel), overseen by neutral countries that have no financial or military interests in the region and an immediate arms embargo on all sides.
3. We call on all countries of the region to initiate peace talks where there are no treaties in place, and
4. We call on all parties to participate in the upcoming United Nations conference for a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East with the aim of disarming the region in the shortest possible time-scale.
5. We call on all countries of the region to renounce the use of war as a means of solving conflicts.

In World without Wars our vision is not a one or two State solution in the territory currently occupied by Israel and Palestine, but rather a Universal Human Nation without borders and restrictions on human beings of any kind. Nevertheless, until this vision can be made a reality we believe it is for the people of the territory to decide on their administration, and if they consider that two States are better than one, we would support such a solution. Clearly any decision taken by people living in a disarmed and peaceful society will not result in walls dividing people and concentrating them into inhuman conditions.

Finally, for all those of us outside who want to help and those inside who want an end to violence, we say that the most important thing that any of us can do is help in the process of reconciliation. "To reconcile is

neither to forget nor to forgive, it is to acknowledge all that has happened and to propose breaking out of the circle of resentment. It is to look at the situation, recognising one's own errors and those of others. To reconcile within oneself is to propose to not take the same road twice, but rather to be ready to make amends twice-over for the wrongs one has done."¹

If we, inside and outside the region, can promote this attitude we will be doing the best we can to bring a nonviolent conclusion to this terrible chapter in human history.

We are not naïve, and we realise that this position is unlikely to be heeded by those in positions of power, but this doesn't mean that our position is not morally correct, and our hope is that a message of reconciliation and nonviolence will be heard in the region and inspire the younger generations to find a new way out of a desperate situation.

¹ Silo, Punta de Vacas, 5th May 2007.