



Statement on violence in Palestine and Israel

Tuesday 10 October, 2023

GAPS stands in solidarity with all those who have lost their lives in the escalation of violence in Palestine and Israel, and express our deep concern for the perpetration of war crimes and further attacks expected over the next few days. The immediate priorities are the cessation of violence, the protection of civilians and the end of the occupation of Palestine.

As a UK-based a network, we work with and speak directly to the UK and other Northern states. We have read and reflected on the many recent statements of unequivocal support for the Israeli state, including after announcements that Israel will enforce a total siege which follows the 16-year long illegal blockade of Gaza and targeted bombings of schools and hospitals. The UK and Northern states are at risk of inadvertently condoning gross human rights violations and violations of International Humanitarian Law.

Many of these Northern states who have stated support for Israel have also recently adopted feminist policies or policies that put the rights of women and girls at its centre, especially through National Action Plans on the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Stating a blanket support for Israel condones the extreme violence that Israel has inflicted upon the Palestinian people in Gaza and the West Bank and is a direct contradiction to these supposed feminist policy commitments. It is urgent and essential to listen to women's rights and women-led organisations – we fully support the [call for protection](#) by our partners the Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling, based in Palestine.

Military aid to Israel must be halted and humanitarian aid to Palestinian people must be maintained, especially crucial during a rapidly escalating humanitarian crisis. International law must be applied consistently across all contexts, and Israel, as the occupying force, must be held accountable for its perpetration of war crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of apartheid. The rights of Palestinians to live safely and freely must be recognised and championed.

If the international community continues with its current approach and fails to condemn Israel for its actions in Gaza as much as it condemns the attacks on Israeli civilians, the system of international humanitarian law will be further undermined and calls to hold others – from Putin to the Taliban – accountable, will ring hollow.

Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS) Secretariat