

Machar SAC Position Statement on the Israel/Hamas War – 12/4/23

Machar recognizes that this is a time of great pain and anger for our congregation, Israelis, Jews, Palestinians, Muslims, and people everywhere. We unequivocally condemn the brutal terrorist attack by Hamas on October 7, 2023, and the ongoing attacks by Hamas and other terrorist groups against the State of Israel. We firmly support Israel's right and obligation to defend its citizens, to secure the release of kidnapped hostages, and to hold Hamas fully accountable. But we also urge a more humane response in light of the terrible plight of the many hostages and the extraordinary suffering of thousands of civilians in Gaza under Israel's retaliatory attacks as well as Hamas' cruel control. We urge the immediate release of all the hostages in Gaza, and the Red Cross monitoring their condition until then.

We mourn the heartbreaking deaths and injuries of Israelis and Palestinians, the loss of homes and precious memories, and the loss of trust among people in these communities. We hope for actions by all that are guided by our humanist principles: a belief in the inherent worth of all human beings, and a desire to increase the wellbeing of others and to strive for peaceful coexistence and security for both Israelis and Palestinians. We beseech Israel and Hamas to enable the provision of critical humanitarian aid to people in Gaza.

This devastating war underscores the urgency of achieving a just and lasting political solution that provides freedom, dignity and security to Israelis and Palestinians alike. We must seek to forge paths that will ultimately end the violence and achieve peace.

This conflict has also led to a dangerous surge of anti-Jewish, anti-Muslim, anti-Palestinian, anti-Arab and anti-Israeli sentiment and actions across this country. This should be strongly condemned at all levels. We must not allow this moment to give cover to people who wish to spread hate and violence. Hatred and fear have no place in a diverse, just and inclusive society.