



***Religions for Peace Welcomes Ceasefire Agreement Between Israel and Hamas,
Calls for Sustained Dialogue for Lasting Peace
A Statement from the *Religions for Peace* Executive Committee***

20 October, New York, NY: After more than two years of a horrific war, Religions for Peace welcomes and celebrates the ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas. The war has caused untold suffering and death, and this ceasefire gives us a profound sense of hope and relief. We celebrate the release of Israeli and Palestinian captives as families and loved ones are reunited.

The ceasefire now offers a critical opportunity for all parties to end the senseless violence, reflect on the cost of continued conflict, and work toward a future defined not by dissonance but by understanding, justice, and peace. Religions for Peace will continue its intensive efforts to advance the interfaith dialogue process that is included in the 20-point Gaza peace plan.

During the past two years of suffering and devastation, this conflict has claimed tens of thousands of innocent lives, devastated communities, destroyed ancient holy sites, and inflicted lasting trauma on countless families. The humanitarian crisis remains urgent, and we call on all stakeholders to ensure that urgently needed food and medicine are quickly and effectively delivered to the people of Gaza.

We urge governments, international organizations, and religious institutions to continue working urgently and intensively for a lasting and sustainable peace. This ceasefire, while fragile, must be seen as more than a cessation of hostilities. It must be treated as a pivotal step toward addressing the root causes of the conflict and laying the foundation for lasting peace. It is incumbent upon all parties to create an environment where coexistence is not just a possibility, but a reality. We fervently pray for the ceasefire to last up to the moment of a complete cessation of all violence.

The path ahead will not be easy, but it is essential. Forgiveness, healing, and reconciliation must guide the journey from this point forward. The suffering of one community must not minimize the suffering of another. One community's hopes must not overshadow the aspirations of another. Peace is a shared and inclusive process that respects the dignity, rights, and aspirations of all. Let this ceasefire mark the beginning of a new chapter, one where dialogue triumphs over violence and harmony over division.

The people of Gaza must be supported in rebuilding and restoring their communities. The need is enormous and the international community must respond to meet the need. In particular, children need to return to school and places of worship must be restored.

We urge leadership in both Israel and Gaza to rise to this moment of history with courage and vision. For long term and sustainable peace, we must address the long-standing grievances, injustices, and instability, respecting international law and empathizing with all involved. In the spirit of shared humanity, let us all work toward a sustainable peace that

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respects the rights, aspirations, and dignity of every individual. The shared suffering must give way to a shared, sacred flourishing for all people in the Holy Land.

We call on the international community to support this delicate ceasefire with unwavering commitment. It is our shared responsibility to promote stability, encourage constructive discussion, and bring resources to rebuild lives and communities. The Holy Land holds a profound significance for billions around the world, and it is our collective duty to ensure that a shared peace defines its future. Religions for Peace will continue to support the diversity of religious leaders engaging in efforts in Israel and Palestine – and across the Middle East – to build peace and motivating their communities to support the ceasefire.

As we mourn the loss of so many human lives, let us also harness the power of collective prayer to invoke the divine compassion that transcends boundaries. Religions for Peace invites you to join in our fervent prayers for the safety and well-being of all people in Gaza, the West Bank, Israel, and globally. Together, we can be the harbingers of peace, unity, and hope in a region that yearns for reconciliation and healing. Together, we can serve as people of conscience, as voices for the voiceless, and as champions of human rights, dignity and freedoms.

Religions for Peace, founded in 1970, is the world's largest and most representative multi-religious movement advancing common action among the world's religious communities for peace—peace for all people and for our planet. Religions for Peace works through its Interreligious Councils in nearly 100 countries in six regions, along with women of faith and youth networks, at the local, national, regional and international levels, and profoundly believes that every individual, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity or background, deserves the fundamental human rights of peace and security.

Links to:

- [Religions for Peace First Statement on the Israel-Hamas Conflict](#)
- [Beyond War and Towards Reconciliation: Multi-Religious Peace Roundtables The Second Tokyo Peace Roundtable Statement](#)