

Members and leadership of the Canadian Association of Professional Employees (CAPE) are deeply concerned by the events that have unfolded in Palestine and Israel since and including October 7, 2023. The violence that has ensued continues to devastate the region, displacing over 2.3 million Palestinians and killing over 25,000 Palestinians¹ and 1,300 Israelis.

CAPE condemns the violence occurring in Palestine and Israel, and condemns the ongoing targeting and killing of Palestinian civilians. CAPE is opposed to the apartheid practices and genocidal tactics that have defined the region for over 75 years².

We grieve with our members whose families have been affected by the escalating violence in Gaza and the West Bank, and stand with our members who have experienced racism, silencing, and intimidation in Canada and from their employer in response to their calls for justice.

As a union of federal public sector workers, CAPE acknowledges that Canada is a settler colonial state and our members work on Indigenous lands. As such, CAPE believes we have a responsibility to work to understand the context, history, and broader conditions that impact workers in occupied territories and the violence they face. The horrors we are witnessing today are deeply connected to long-standing systems of oppression, occupation, and settler colonialism, and do not exist in isolation.

CAPE joins the calls of hundreds of labour unions, human rights and international law organizations, and the United Nations for a permanent ceasefire and an immediate end to the collective punishment and slaughter of the Palestinian people by the Israeli state.

¹ United Nations Population Fund, <https://www.unfpa.org/crisis-occupied-palestinian-territory>, January 5, 2024; United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, <https://www.unrwa.org/resources/reports/unrwa-situation-report-63-situation-gaza-strip-and-west-bank-including-east-0>, January 11, 2024; Al Jazeera, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/longform/2023/10/9/israel-hamas-war-in-maps-and-charts-live-tracker>, January 10, 2024 (other sources estimate 30,000+ including those presumed dead under rubble); UNICEF, <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/gaza-has-become-graveyard-thousands-children>, October 31, 2023.

² Amnesty International, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2022/02/israels-system-of-apartheid/>, February 1, 2022; International Federation for Human Rights, <https://www.fidh.org/en/region/north-africa-middle-east/israel-palestine/israeli-apartheid-the-legacy-of-the-ongoing-nakba-at-75>, May 15, 2023; BDS Movement, <https://bdsmovement.net/colonialism-and-apartheid/summary>; Institute for Middle East Understanding, <https://imeu.org/article/quick-facts-the-palestinian-nakba>, April 5, 2023.

CAPE calls upon the Government of Canada to:

- Unequivocally call for an immediate and lasting ceasefire,
- Take clear, public steps to ensure the upholding and enforcement of international law to stop the war crimes in Gaza³,
- Call for the release of the 136 Israeli hostages⁴ and the over 1,300 Palestinian civilians held in unlawful or arbitrary detention⁵,
- Contribute to establishing humanitarian corridors and providing humanitarian aid to the millions of displaced Palestinian families,
- Demand the protection and immunity of Palestinian journalists and their families in the region⁶, and
- Take action to ensure enforcement of International Court of Justice's January 26, 2024 order to prevent acts of genocide.

CAPE remains committed to ensuring members are informed and supported in their workplace in the face of rising instances of antisemitism, anti-Palestinian racism, and Islamophobia.

It is CAPE's priority to advocate, protect, and respond to member needs, interests, and rights. CAPE commits to:

- Encouraging members to engage further in solidarity actions and activities as CAPE members toward a peaceful and just resolution,
- Remaining informed on developments in the region and on the realities and context of fellow workers and their families in Palestine,
- Supporting members in their learning on Palestine and Israel's history and context, and

³ Amnesty International, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/10/damning-evidence-of-war-crimes-as-israeli-attacks-wipe-out-entire-families-in-gaza/>, October 20, 2023; Human Rights Watch, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/12/18/israel-starvation-used-weapon-war-gaza>, December 18, 2023; United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/10/gaza-un-experts-decry-bombing-hospitals-and-schools-crimes-against-humanity>, October 19, 2023, and <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/11/gaza-un-experts-call-international-community-prevent-genocide-against>, November 16, 2023.

⁴ AP News, <https://apnews.com/article/israel-hamas-remaining-hostages-gaza-d760e0b30a5fc8bb29623ee350ce0668>, December 1, 2023.

⁵ B'tselem: The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, https://www.btselem.org/administrative_detention/statistics, November 20, 2023.

⁶ Committee to Protect Journalists, <https://cpj.org/2024/01/journalist-casualties-in-the-israel-gaza-conflict/>, January 11, 2024; The Guardian, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/dec/21/israel-idf-accused-targeting-journalists-gaza>, December 21, 2023; Democracy Now, https://www.democracynow.org/2024/1/8/palestinian_journalists, January 8, 2024.

- Exploring opportunities and options for building solidarity with workers and humanitarian initiatives in the region.

CAPE demands an immediate and permanent ceasefire as the first step to lasting peace.