PRESS RELEASE

IPMN Condemns Violence in Gaza & Israel, Encourages Better Reporting From US Media

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The Israel/Palestine Mission Network (IPMN) of the Presbyterian Church (USA) strongly condemns the violence in and around Gaza which in recent days has escalated to the highest level in nearly four years. No civilian population, whether acting as occupier or living under occupation, should live under fear of violence or threats of violence.

The IPMN also calls for accurate reporting of the escalation so that Americans do not make judgments on the escalation based on incorrect or incomplete timelines, as have been presented in some media coverage.

“We believe that context is important,” said Professor Nahida Gordon of IPMN. “Most Americans are not hearing about the continual Israeli provocations, or the siege and blockade. More Palestinians were killed in Gaza on Wednesday than Israelis have been killed by rockets from Gaza in the past three years.”

According to Israeli human rights organization B’tselem, from the end of Operation Cast Lead at the end of January 2009 to September 2012, Israeli forces have killed 271 Palestinians in Gaza, while 4 Israelis were killed by Palestinians. Of the 271 Palestinians who died, at least 77 including women and children, were known to be civilians not engaged in any hostilities.

Last Thursday, November 8, Israel broke a two-week lull in violence with an incursion into Gaza that left a 12-year-old boy dead. This incursion, near al-Qarara village, is the often unreported genesis of the latest round of violence. In the last 24 hours, some observers have raised questions regarding the timing of Israel’s escalation, questioning Benjamin Netanyahu’s motives so close to a domestic election.

Shelling Tel Aviv and bombing Gaza City are both abhorrent, but Americans need to know the difference in fire power between Israeli Defense Forces, one of most powerful in the world, and ad hoc militant forces within an embattled Gaza.
Rev. Katherine Cunningham, Moderator of IPMN said, "No violence against civilians is justified and we condemn it in the strongest terms. We call for a full and complete reporting of the facts as they unfold in Gaza and Israel."

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TheIPMN.org
The Israel Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

*This network is mandated by 216th General Assembly, 2004*

In joyful obedience to the call of Christ, and in solidarity with churches and our other partners in the Middle East, this network covenants to engage, consolidate, nourish, and channel the energy in the Presbyterian Church (USA) toward the goal of a just peace in Israel/Palestine by facilitating education, promoting partnerships, and coordinating advocacy. Our network speaks TO the Church not FOR the Church.


2 B’Tselem | The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories - www.btselem.org

3 TIMELINE: Israel's Latest Escalation in Gaza - Institute for Middle East Understanding - http://imeu.net/news/article0023227.shtml

4 Bodies for Ballots, by Yousef Munayyer, Newsweek’s The Daily Beast, http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/11/15/bodies-for-ballots.html