

*October 20, 2023*

Alternatives is genuinely concerned about the current events impacting people in the Gaza Strip following Israel's order for evacuations amid ongoing airstrikes and a deepening crisis. We strongly condemn the bombing of civilians. This condemnation includes the 1,400 Israeli casualties in the October 7th attack by Hamas. We recognize and empathize with families impacted by the violence overseas who have had their communities destroyed and are experiencing unprecedented trauma, which we know to have lasting and immeasurable effects.

Last week, the Chicago City Council passed a resolution condemning the attack by Hamas on October 7th - but this resolution does not go far enough in standing with the children of Gaza. In the same week, Wadea Al-Fayoume, a 6-year-old Palestinian-American boy and his mother, Hanaan Shahin, experienced the real-time consequences of an individual fueled by hate and xenophobia. This attack, fueled by the ongoing conflict, resulted in the death of Wadea Al-Fayoume. Both the city council resolution and the murder of an innocent child are unacceptable. Without a shadow of a doubt, history will remember those who stood by while people were being harmed.

Alternatives is closely following the widely-documented humanitarian crisis.

- At least 4,079 Palestinians have been killed, including 1,413 children and 806 women, with approximately 3,420 civilians among the dead. More than 15,000 additional Palestinians have been injured in various ways, with more than half of them being children and women.
- More than 1,400 people in Israel have been killed, mostly civilians who were slain in Hamas' Oct. 7 attack. The assault also resulted in some 200 being taken captive into Gaza.
- Israel's unlawful blockade of Gaza is preventing desperately needed food, medical aid, fuel, electricity, and water into Gaza, and preventing sick and wounded civilians from leaving to receive medical treatment elsewhere.

Access to basic needs for all people is one of the cornerstones of our organization. We agree with the UN that even in times of war, families should be able to access medical care, food, and all other universal rights. We strongly condemn collective punishment, as it is both unjust and inhumane. And, while we acknowledge Hamas is a terrorist organization, it's essential to remember that their actions do not reflect the views and aspirations of all Palestinian people.

As an anti-racist organization dedicated to the values of liberation, Alternatives supports the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people who live under occupation. We support their right to exercise their human rights with dignity. We recognize it is possible for us to call for the liberation of the Palestinian people and the safety of Palestinian and Israeli people alike. We also condemn antisemitism and call for the Israeli hostages to be released by Hamas.

We uphold our commitment to ending oppression, as it is the key to achieving meaningful peace. We join with our partner organizations also supporting peace by calling for an end to the violence in Gaza.

In alignment with our core value of liberation and in order to amplify it, Alternatives will close its offices on Friday, October 20th in solidarity with Gaza.