

# Pax Christi Victoria

*International Christian Peace Movement*

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## **To the Australian Federal Government and to Australian Faith Leaders**

Pax Christi Victoria is a branch of the Ecumenical International Christian Peace Movement Pax Christi International.

Our movement is deeply concerned about the ongoing violence and the conflict between Israel and the people of Gaza.

We are horrified at and deplore the actions of Hamas on October 7. We are horrified at and deplore the force and destruction the Israeli forces are waging in Gaza, the ongoing destruction of hospitals and other infrastructure and the indiscriminate killing of children, women and men.

We strongly urge the Australian Government to work with the International community to bring about an immediate ceasefire, supervised by a United Nations Peacekeeping force, release of the hostages and an ongoing commitment to building a just and lasting peace. There can be no lasting peace until the root causes of the conflict are addressed. Hamas and similar organisations represent a desperate response to the illegal occupation of Palestinian territories, the expansion of illegal Jewish settlements in Occupied Palestine, the violation of the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes and the ongoing siege of Gaza. The insecurity of the state of Israel relates directly to centuries of anti-Semitism in Europe, America and elsewhere which has deep roots in both the Western and Eastern Christian traditions.

We urge the Australian government to work with the UN for a UN convened peace conference at which the Government of Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Hamas, and representatives of Israeli and Palestinian Civil Society come to the table to establish

1. The demilitarisation of Gaza and the Occupied Territories.
2. The establishment of an independent autonomous state which includes the Occupied Territories and Gaza to be guaranteed by the UN Jordan, Egypt and Syria.
3. An International Plan for the rebuilding of Gaza with the joint involvement of the USA, the UK, the EC and China.
4. The ending of Israeli settlements in the Occupied Territories.

Yours sincerely

Harry Kerr

On behalf of Pax Christi Victoria

Melbourne 14 November 2023