

# AN OPEN LETTER

As men and women of the health and medical professions, our first responsibility is to prevent harm. We believe that a state's responsibility towards its citizens cannot be reduced to a periodic exercise of its military power. It is incumbent on the state to present a clear and real vision for equality, peace and freedom as only these can provide long-term security. However, in the absence of a vision, we are witnessing another show of military strength.

As medical practitioners and campaigners for human rights and peace, we encounter the victims and witness distress, suffering and humiliation every day. Rooted in this experience, our belief is that the way forward to a just solution, and to prevent more bloodshed, is through the realization that the liberty and security of the residents of Israel is bound up with the liberty and security of the residents of the occupied territories - the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Years of intensifying control and closure of Gaza on the one hand, and the absence of activity to promote a just solution and end to the occupation on the other hand, is leading us into the abyss, fanning the flames of hatred and revenge that undermine the basis on which a healthy society rests.

Out of concern for the lives and welfare of all residents of this region we implore - end the firing and the incitement. Don't bring more victims to our door requiring our care. Put the lives, health and rights of all people at the heart of your concerns. Do not continue, in our name, this destructive and vengeful operation. The time has come to devote the resources and energies presently directed to violence and killing, to finally ending the occupation and to establishing a new vision for this region.

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