



# MENDING THE SACRED HOOP

## Statement on Solidarity with the Civilian Victims of State Conflict

Violence Free Minnesota recognizes that there are currently state conflicts occurring in Myanmar<sup>1</sup>, Ukraine<sup>2</sup>, Israel and Palestine<sup>3</sup>, Ethiopia<sup>4</sup>, Sudan<sup>5</sup>, Yemen<sup>6</sup>, Syria/Kurdistan<sup>7</sup>, Somalia<sup>8</sup>, Nagorno-Karabakh<sup>9</sup>, and many others.

Violence Free Minnesota recognizes that, according to the UN, civilian casualties make up as much as 87% of wartime casualties.<sup>10</sup> This statistic is driven not only by deaths, but by the knock-on effects of conflict including displacement, food insecurity, and disease.<sup>11</sup>

Violence Free Minnesota recognizes that there has been a general drop in all types of violent crime in the past century, including intimate partner violence.<sup>12</sup> Violence Free Minnesota further recognizes that this drop has coincided with a dramatic increase in state conflict related deaths.<sup>13</sup> Violence Free Minnesota stands with all victims of violence, whether interpersonal or state-inflicted.

Violence Free Minnesota recognizes that the patriarchal structures which lead to domestic violence in interpersonal relationships also contribute to conflict violence on the state level, and that there is a well-established link between state conflict and increases in intimate partner violence and sexual violence, both during and immediately after the time of the conflict.<sup>14</sup>

Violence Free Minnesota calls for the immediate ceasefire of all armed conflict, wherever found, as soon as a resolute peace can be achieved. Peace must not be defined by the

absence of conflict but by the presence of justice, dignity, political agency, and personal sovereignty of all in society, including the historically disenfranchised.

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<sup>1</sup> [The Military Junta May Soon Be Defeated in Myanmar's Civil War - UN Dispatch](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Ukraine war live updates: Latest news on Russia and the war in Ukraine \(cnbc.com\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [December 12, 2023 Israel-Hamas war \(cnn.com\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Ethiopia's Ominous New War in Amhara | Crisis Group](#)

<sup>5</sup> [African mediators claim progress in latest effort to end war in Sudan | Conflict News | Al Jazeera](#)

<sup>6</sup> [War in Yemen | Global Conflict Tracker \(cfr.org\)](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Conflict Between Turkey and Armed Kurdish Groups | Global Conflict Tracker \(cfr.org\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Somali Civil War – The Organization for World Peace \(theowp.org\)](#)

<sup>9</sup> [The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: A Visual Explainer | Crisis Group](#)

<sup>10</sup> [Ninety Per Cent of War-Time Casualties Are Civilians, Speakers Stress, Pressing Security Council to Fulfil Responsibility, Protect Innocent People in Conflicts | UN Press](#)

<sup>11</sup> See footnote 10

<sup>12</sup> [What Caused Crime to Decline in the U.S.? - The Atlantic](#)

<sup>13</sup> [Global Peace Index: A historic rise in global conflict deaths suggests violent new era - The Washington Post](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Gender-Based Violence and Justice in Conflict and Post-Conflict Areas - GIWPS \(georgetown.edu\)](#)



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Violence Free Minnesota recognizes that our own nation has been a significant contributor to and instigator of global conflict, and condemns these actions. Violence Free Minnesota condemns the structure and behavior of the Military Industrial Complex.<sup>15</sup>

Violence Free Minnesota calls for all state entities to enact robust and generous refugee policies which respect and meet the needs of conflict-impacted people and recognizes the intersectional issues they are likely to encounter, including gender-based violence.

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<sup>15</sup> [The Military Industrial Complex Is More Powerful Than Ever | The Nation](#)



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## Statement on the Genocide in Gaza

Violence Free Minnesota joins many in the local and international community in calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire to the present war in Gaza. Violence Free Minnesota recognizes that significant acts of state violence have led to the mass victimization and genocide of Palestinian civilians. There is no excuse for any state or military authority to target, whether intentionally or through indifference, civilian populations. The violence in Gaza has disproportionately impacted Palestinian women and children, who comprise the majority of those killed and injured. The continued actions of the military participants in this conflict rob women and children of their political agency and personal safety. Violence Free Minnesota condemns all attempts, whether within interpersonal relationships or at the state level, to establish power and control over marginalized communities.

Violence Free Minnesota recognizes that the methods of settler colonialism and mass displacement of indigenous people were perpetrated and often invented by white colonizers throughout the Americas, with a genocide being perpetrated by our own nation and our colonial forebears.<sup>1</sup> Violence Free Minnesota recognizes that these cruelties within our own borders have never been fully remediated and are indeed ongoing. In calling for the liberation and political enfranchisement of Palestinian civilians, Violence Free Minnesota also calls for the liberation and political enfranchisement of our Native American neighbors and relatives.

We recognize that the inciting incident of the latest round of mass violence was a horrific terror attack by Hamas with the significant weaponization of sexual violence.<sup>2</sup> We unequivocally condemn such an attack. We also recognize that the violence inflicted upon Palestinians has been disproportionate and that Israeli attacks on Gaza have predated the October 7 incursion by Hamas, and indeed stretch all the way back to the beginning of the Nakba.<sup>3</sup> Finally, we recognize that the violence inflicted upon Palestinians has itself been gendered, with particular targeting of Palestinian mothers being noted by a United Nations Special Rapporteur as far back as November 20.<sup>4</sup> We recognize that, as of November 20, there were an estimated 50,000 pregnant women in Gaza, including 5,500 due to give birth in the next 30 days, with the medical infrastructure in Gaza being largely disabled by bombardment and occupation.<sup>5</sup> We recognize that Palestinian women and children have made up 14,330 deaths of 24,142 total deaths as of

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<sup>1</sup> [U.S. sees "unprecedented," "staggering" rise in antisemitic and anti-Muslim incidents since start of Israel-Hamas war, groups say - CBS News](#)

<sup>2</sup> [UN hears accounts of sexual violence during 7 October attacks by Hamas | Israel-Gaza war | The Guardian](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Al-Nakba | Al-Nakba | Al Jazeera](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Women bearing the brunt of Israel-Gaza conflict: UN expert | OHCHR](#)

<sup>5</sup> See footnote 4



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December 11 according to the Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor.<sup>6</sup>

Violence Free Minnesota further recognizes that there has been an unacceptable rise in both Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in the United States, including in Minnesota.<sup>7</sup> We unequivocally condemn any action which furthers these ideologies. The actions of the political state of Israel and the militant group Hamas are not reflective of the personal thoughts, actions, or beliefs of Jewish or Islamic people. Nor are these actions necessarily reflective of the personal views of the civilians in either state.

We recognize that the United States has contributed to prolonging and assisting this genocide through the provision of arms, ammunition, and international political support.<sup>8</sup> We further recognize that the United States has done the same throughout the Global South for much of our own history. We condemn the US veto of a United Nations effort to bring about a swifter ceasefire, with the US being the only security council member to vote against the measure.<sup>9</sup>

Violence Free Minnesota urges the establishment of peace in the region, which includes the full political sovereignty of all civilians, including and especially the Palestinian civilians in Gaza and elsewhere who have suffered under the boot of apartheid.<sup>10</sup> The establishment of peace must necessarily entail the release of all hostages, including those Israelis taken by Hamas on October 7 and the Palestinians held in administrative detention without charge or trial in Israel.<sup>11</sup> We further urge our own government and the international community to be generous in the provision of non-military aid to rebuild communities and ensure a safe path to peace. Finally, we call on all states to adopt generous refugee policies for the care of civilians displaced by the conflict. We do not support the forced resettling of any population, and urge the rapid reestablishment of safe and dignified communities for Palestinians within their historic land.

This statement reflects our views as Violence Free Minnesota and Mending the Sacred Hoop staff and we do not claim to speak for or represent our membership's views.

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<sup>6</sup> [Euro-Med Monitor on X: "#Infographic | Statistics on the Israeli Genocide in the Gaza Strip \(07 October-11 December 2023\) https://t.co/hixLfWXtMD" / X \(twitter.com\)](https://t.co/hixLfWXtMD)

<sup>7</sup> [U.S. sees "unprecedented," "staggering" rise in antisemitic and anti-Muslim incidents since start of Israel-Hamas war, groups say - CBS News](#)

<sup>8</sup> [The State Department approves the sale of tank ammunition to Israel in a deal that bypasses Congress.](#)

<sup>9</sup> [US vetoes resolution on Gaza which called for 'immediate humanitarian ceasefire' | UN News](#)

<sup>10</sup> [Israel's apartheid against Palestinians - Amnesty International](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Why Does Israel Have So Many Palestinians in Detention and Available to Swap? | Human Rights Watch \(hrw.org\)](#)