



# ISSOP

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INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY for  
SOCIAL PEDIATRICS and CHILD HEALTH

## International Society for Social Pediatrics and Child Health (ISSOP) Statement on Israel-Palestine Conflict

Though the acute conflict between Israel and Gaza has subsided, its direct and indirect impact on children remains. ISSOP strongly condemns violence against children in whatever context and has issued a *Declaration on the Prohibition of Harm to Children in Armed Conflict* (<file:///C:/Users/jlgold/Downloads/Beirut-Declaration-on-Prohibition-of-Harm-to-Children-in-Armed-Conflict.pdf>) and a Statement condemning the bombing of civilian areas in Gaza by Israel and the firing of rockets into Israel by Palestinian groups in Gaza (<file:///C:/Users/jlgold/Downloads/ISSOP-statement-Protect-children-in-Israel-and-Gaza.pdf>). Beyond physical injury, the psychological trauma caused by these actions will affect the health and well-being of children in Israel and Gaza throughout their life course. These actions represent profound violations of children's rights and may constitute war crimes by both Israel and Gaza.

ISSOP supports the need to finally and decidedly address the root causes for the continuing assault on the rights of Palestinian children. Though we acknowledge the complexity of the history and politics of the region—and contribution of Israeli, Palestinian, and other State and non-State actors to the conflict—ongoing violation of Palestinian civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights on the West Bank and Gaza remain primary drivers of the violence impacting children and the failure to attain diplomatic solutions to the ongoing conflict.

### Human rights violations

Israel has legal responsibilities as an occupying power under international conventions, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), for the safety, welfare, and protection of the human rights of children living in the occupied Palestinian territories (oPt). The [2014 report](#) of the UN Rapporteur on Human Rights in the oPt describes the impact of human rights violations on the Palestinian people. Ongoing Israel activities that particularly affect the health and well-being of Palestinian children include:

- Growth of Israeli settlements on Palestinian territory and travel restrictions that impede access of children to health care, education, and their basic needs for optimal growth and development.
- Evictions of Palestinian families from housing held for decades, particularly in the East Jerusalem area.
- Demolition of housing.



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- Exposure to violence resulting in psychological trauma that impacts children's health and well-being across the life course.
- Home invasions by the Israeli military that traumatize children.

These and other Israeli activities impact the multiple Promotion, Protection, and Participation rights of Palestinian children as articulated in the CRC—which Israel has ratified.

## **Call to Action**

ISSOP condemns the failure of Israel to fulfil the rights of Palestinian children to optimal health and well-being. Whilst ISSOP recognizes the contribution of all parties to the ongoing conflict and violations of children's rights, Israel as an occupying power has a responsibility to institute sincere and equitable peace negotiations, with the assistance of the international community and participation on an equal basis of the Palestinian people.

Thus:

*We call* on paediatricians and other child health professionals and professional organizations in Israel and Palestinian territories, with the support of the global community of paediatricians, child health professionals, and professional organizations, to demand an end to child rights violations in Palestinian territories and to promote peace and the cessation of all hostilities on both sides.

*We call* on the Israeli Medical Association and the Israeli Paediatric Association, and the Paediatric Society of Palestine and Palestinian Medical Council to work together to advance the rights of children throughout the region and promote peace.

We call on all paediatricians, child health professionals, and professional organisations globally to request that all parties in the region recognise and respect the rights of Palestinian and Israeli children to optimal survival and development, cease the use of armed force that can potentially harm children throughout the region, and implement diplomacy that will ensure the peaceful development of the Palestinian people.

*Furthermore, we call* on all paediatricians and child health professionals and professional organizations to work together to advance the rights of all children throughout the world to protection from the impact of violence and armed conflict.



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Finally, recognizing the direct and indirect involvement of multiple nations and non-State actors in this conflict—involvement that includes production and sale of armaments to warring parties and training and supporting combatants, *we call* on all child health professionals to advocate and work within their own countries and organizations to stop the impact of armed conflict on children.

If there is a motive, reason, justification, or argument that generates *hope* to mitigate the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and those in other regions of the world—it is children and childhood. All children, including Israeli and Palestinian children, have the right to be born, grow, develop, and thrive in communities that have moved beyond the interests and pettiness of governments, groups, and individuals that prioritize their political, religious, economic, and personal *self-interests*—without considering the *best-interests* of society, in particular the *best-interests* children.

Children should not be condemned to live in permanent states of hostility with ongoing violation of their rights. Violence cannot be eradicated with more violence.