



Greetings beloveds,

It has been an agonizing month, and for some much longer. When the devastating events of October 7th first occurred SACReD leaned into our values and tended to our beloved community. We spent time reaching into our partners and those directly impacted to listen and to learn how we could best support them. We are a multi-faith alliance committed to Reproductive Justice for all. We reached in to two of our directly impacted partners and invited them to collaborate with us in crafting a statement, which you'll find below. Working in coalition takes deep grace and compassion when faced with differences in lived experiences and beliefs, however, we know that collective action and care is what will see us through. We are deeply thankful to [National Council of Jewish Women](#) and [HEART](#) for saying yes to this process with us and we pray that we can continue to find our way forward together.

In Faith,

The SACReD Team
October 8, 2024

SACReD Statement **Crafted with HEART and the National Council of Jewish Women**

On October 7, 2023 Hamas carried out a violent attack on Israel, resulting in the killing of thousands. As part of the attack, over 200 people were kidnapped and have since been detained as hostages, including children and the elderly. In response, Israel has cut off access to electricity, water, food, and other resources as well carrying out ground in and air strikes in Gaza. This is an intensification of the hardships Palestinians in Gaza were already experiencing due to the ongoing occupation that heavily controls the movement of people and resources. The ongoing bombings has resulted in the killing of thousands of Palestinian civilians, mostly children.

The ancient proverb of the Kikuyu people of what's now Kenya, "when elephants fight, it is the grass that gets trampled" is most relevant in this crisis as we see the devastating effects the war has on the civilian populations. We lament and denounce the mass slaughter of innocent Israeli civilians by Hamas, just as we lament and denounce the retaliation against innocent Palestinians by Israel. We denounce all war crimes being committed.

We keep asking ourselves: "Where is God in this? What is the multi-faith pastoral Reproductive Justice response to this moment?" Right now we believe that it is up to us to be co-conspirators with the Divine to bring about true justice for the most vulnerable and impacted. What would it mean to center our Reproductive Justice principles and values in this moment and think not just of those who look like, pray like, or worship like us, but also of all those who don't? Human rights should be universal.

SACReD is a multi-faith organization committed to the tenets of Reproductive Justice:

- The human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy
- The human right to have children
- The human right not to have children
- The human right to parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities

SACReD imagines a world where Reproductive Justice is the lived reality.

We want a world where all Israelis and Jews are able to parent the children they have in safe and sustainable communities, free from violence. **Full stop.** We want a world where Palestinians (of all faiths), and people of the Muslim and Arab diaspora are able to parent the children they have in safe and sustainable communities, free from violence. **Full stop.**

We believe that all people are created in the divine image and are each deserving of safety and dignity. We grieve with our Palestinian, Israeli, Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Arab, and other directly impacted kin in and connected to the region known as Palestine and Israel. We grieve the impact of systemic oppression that fuels anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim political actions, perpetuates scarcity, and seeds conditions where many turn to violence as a means of preserving their own communities. We mourn this ongoing loss of life while knowing that this violence, along with its intergenerational trauma, is rooted in dominance and fear over abundance and mutuality.

We grieve the attack on Hanaan Shahin and the horrific murder of her son Wadea Al Fayoume in Chicago, as well as the spike in anti-Jewish incidents occurring in the United States and around the world, such as the threats made against Senator Jack Rosen and the students at Cornell University. We denounce antisemitism. We denounce Islamophobia, wherever these evils appear.

We do not have answers for further policy, but we have to approach things from the wisdom that violence has gotten us here and will not move anyone forward in a positive way. We do have a heart for our people and deep care for our Beloved Community. As we have listened to those directly impacted and held space for them, what has become clearer is the need for us to turn toward each other when turning away and doubling down on our factions would be easier. Now is the time to lean into the strength of being a diverse community and to be courageous enough to be with the complexities that this moment is calling us to.

From HEART

We are grieving as we bear witness to ongoing violence and horrific war crimes. We grieve the innocent lives lost in Occupied Palestine and Israel and are sending love to those who are processing this tragedy. Let us hold space for our grief and reject any weaponization of grief into vehicles of further hate and destruction. Let us implore Allah Subhanahu wa Ta'ala to ease this pain, to bring rain and extinguish the fires burning in Gaza, and to safely deliver the souls lost in Israel and Palestine to places of peace and serenity.

National Council of Jewish Women's Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg adds:

We hold our grief and rage about so many precious, irreplaceable innocent lives lost, both Palestinian and Israeli. We offer our prayers that the hostages and those displaced by the war can soon return home, and that we see an end to the cycles of bloodshed. We believe that every single human being was created in the divine image, and that the path to everyone's freedom--and to our collective peace and safety, requires seeing everyone's humanity and rooting for everyone's liberation. That's the way out. That's the only way through.

The enormity of this grief will not be sorted through overnight, and the impact of it will be felt for generations. There will be no quick fix to the devastation created by the loss of innocent lives and decades of occupation. However, there must be urgent action to

prevent genocide and further violence. With that we know a suspension of hostilities must occur to tend to the bodies of the physically injured and the spirits of all who have been emotionally and psychologically scarred.

We have a moral imperative as advocates for Reproductive Justice to center the most vulnerable right now and to preserve what we can so that those who remain may have any hope of living in a world free from violence. We must pray and act so that all may be released from captivity, war, and all children may have a chance of healthy and sustainable futures.

We leave you with this Prayer of Mothers for Life and Peace.

In Faith,

The SACReD Team

غنية الحياة والسلام
תפילה למעמד המשותף
Prayer of Mothers for Life and Peace

by Sheikha Ibtisam Maḥameed & Rabbi Tamar Elad-Appelbaum
Amichai Lau-Lavie (translation)
from the Open Siddur Project

صلاة مشتركة
اله الحياة
الذي يُشفي القلوب الحزينة والمتألّمة
استمع لو سمحت الى صلاة الأمهات
لأنك لم تخلقنا لكي نقتل بعضنا بعضاً
وليس لكي نعيش بحالة من الخوف, الغضب, والكراهية في عالمك هذا
بل لكي نسمح لبعضنا البعض أن نذكر أسمك
.اسم الحياة, اسم السلام في العالم

מלך חפץ בחיים
הרופא לשבורי לב ומחבש לעצבותם
שמע נא תפילת אמהות
שאתה לא בראתנו על מנת שנהרוג זה בזה
ולא על מנת שנחיה בפחד, כעס ושנאה בעולמך
אלא על מנת שנדע לתת רשות זה לזה לקיים את שמך
.שם חיים, שם שלום בעולם

God of Life
Who heals the broken hearted and binds up their wounds
May it be your will to hear the prayer of mothers
For you did not create us to kill each other
Nor to live in fear, anger or hatred in your world
But rather you have created us so we can grant permission to one another to sanctify
Your name of Life, your name of Peace in this world.

على جميع هؤلاء أنا أبكي دوماً
أبكي خوفاً على الأطفال في الليالي
يحمل الآباء أطفالهم الصغار واليأس والظلام في قلوبهم
على البوابة التي أغلقت والتي لا نعرف من سوف يقوم بفتحها

על אלה אני בוכיה עיני יורדה מים
על ילדים בוכים מפחד בלילות
על הורים אוחזים עולליהם ויאוש ואפלה בלבם
על שער אשר נסגר ומי יקום ויפתחהו טרם פנה יום

For these things I weep, my eye, my eye runs down with water
For our children crying at nights,
For parents holding their children with despair and darkness in their hearts
For a gate that is closing, and who will open it before the day has ended?[1]

وبالدموع والصلوات التي أصليها طيلة الوقت
وبدموع النساء اللواتي يشعرن بهذا الألم القوي في هذه الأوقات العصبية
أنا أرفع يدي إليك يا ربي أن ترحمنا
لنعيش مع بعضنا البعض
ونشفق على بعضنا البعض
ونواسي بعضنا البعض
ونأمل الخير لبعضنا البعض

ובדמעות ובתפלות שאני מתפללת כל הזמן
ובדמעות כל הנשים שכואבות את הכאב החזק בזמן הקשה הזה
הריני מרימה את ידי למעלה אנא ממך אדוני רחם עלינו
שמע קולנו ה' אלהינו בימי הרעה האלה שלא נתיאש
ונראה חיים זה בזה
ונרחם זה על זה
ונצטער זה על זה
ונקווה לזה לזה

And with my tears and prayers which I pray
And with the tears of all women who deeply feel the pain of these difficult days
I raise my hands to you please God have mercy on us
Hear our voice that we shall not despair
That we shall see life in each other,
That we shall have mercy for each other,
That we shall have pity on each other,
That we shall hope for each other

ولكي نكتب قصة حياتنا في كتاب الحياة
من أجلك يا اله الحياة
امنحنا أن نختار الحياة
لأنك السلام ومنزلتك السلام وكل ما لديك سلام
بإذن الله لنقل آمين

ונכתוב את חיינו בספר החיים
למענך אלהים חיים.
תן שנבחר בחיים
כי אתה שלום וביתך שלום וכל אשר לך שלום
וכן יהי רצון ונאמר אמן

And we shall write our lives in the book of Life
For your sake God of Life
Let us choose Life.
For you are Peace, your world is Peace and all that is yours is Peace,
And so shall be your will and let us say Amen.