

## **Statement of the European Jews for a Just Peace (EJJP)**

We, European Jews for a Just Peace (EJJP), have no words strong enough to express our shock and pain after Hamas' horrific attack of October 7 in Israel.

This terrible massacre is a war crime and a crime against humanity.

Slaughtering hundreds of unarmed and defenseless civilians - men, women, children, babies, and seniors - in the most horrific manner, can never be justified. No political context whatsoever can justify a massacre.

We are broken-hearted. Yet, sad and angry as we are, we oppose revenge against the Palestinians or collective punishment of the population of Gaza for the horrific crimes perpetrated by Hamas. That will not bring back the dead. More violence and suffering helps no one.

Israel must immediately stop its collective punishment campaign. The violent attack will only lead to more devastation and ensure the cycle of violence continues. One massacre does not justify another. One war crime does not justify another. Using the grief and shock to justify revenge and more civilian bloodshed only leads to more hatred and suffering for both Israelis and Palestinians. We therefore call for an immediate ceasefire by both sides.

We are extremely worried about the civilians who were kidnapped. We call for all efforts to be made to reach an immediate exchange of prisoners. That is possible and urgent. Israel holds vast numbers of Palestinians in its prisons, including women, minors and elderly. We recall that Gilad Shalit, the Israeli soldier who was kidnapped in 2006, was released by Hamas in a prisoner exchange with Israel.

Israel is addicted to occupation. The international community must make Israel accept it has to end the occupation and allow the Palestinians to exercise their right to self-determination.