

## **YWCA Hartford Region Statement on the Crisis in the Middle East**

YWCA Hartford Region is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. Our very mission vehemently condemns any and all hate-filled acts of violence and atrocities committed against any human being, no matter where it manifests.

We unequivocally condemn the attacks and violence being perpetrated. Our hearts are broken as we see reports of those mercilessly slain, injured, and kidnapped. Those who died, who will die, and those who barely survive without basic human needs fulfilled, leave us shocked and in grief.

Women and girls living in war zones experience more gender-based violence and are the targets of rape and other sexual violence by armed combatants in war, acts that are in direct violation of internationally recognized human rights standards and laws.

The number of people who have lost their lives and will lose everything is a humanitarian crisis of epic proportions.

As this crisis deepens, we implore those engaged in war to allow more humanitarian aid to come in and help those without food, water and medical supplies. Let them address the needs of women, children, and the most vulnerable and assure us that those giving aid are protected. Essential human rights should be sacrosanct. Sadly, in global conflict, this is not the case.

We are outraged as we witness increased levels of racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and hate for any person who is different, here and around the world.

At YWCA Hartford Region, we believe that all people, particularly all women and girls, are safe from violence of any kind and free to live a life of equity and opportunity. We will continue to live our mission by doing the hard work of eliminating racism and empowering women.