

## **STATEMENT OF IFSW-AFRICA REGION ON ISRAEL-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT**

The Israeli Palestinian Conflict is no doubt one of the most intractable conflicts in the world. Despite a long-term peace process and the general reconciliation of Israel with Egypt and Jordan, Israelis and Palestinians have failed to reach a final peace agreement. There are unresolved issues such as mutual recognition, borders security, water rights controls of Jerusalem Israeli settlements Palestinian freedom movement and Palestinian claims of right of return for refugees.

As members of the Global professional Social Work fraternity whose core values are peace, social justice, respect for human dignity and promotion of the wellbeing of all people regardless of race and creed, we had hoped and prayed that peace efforts invested over the years by the international community and United Nations towards the resolution of this conflict will one day bear the fruit that we all wish for-peaceful coexistence and sustainable development.

The ongoing conflict in Gaza which has claimed over 1800 lives including women and children in Gaza and a further 64 soldiers and 4 civilians in Israel has certainly eroded, to some extent, the gains of the Palestinian-Israeli peace process over the years. As Social Workers we have observed with trepidation, disappointment and disbelief the level of violence associated with this recent conflict. It appears as though the lives and suffering of the vulnerable and disadvantage do not matter to the political actors in the conflict.

Our optimism for a peaceful resolution of the conflict still remains nevertheless as it is anchored on the fact that polls conducted in 2011 by a University found that an increasing percentage of Israelis and Palestinians (i.e. 70% and 63% respectively) support an end to violence. These represent ordinary and innocent people who are most affected by the violence.

It is in the light of this that the African Region of the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) joins the social work community in condemning the killing of innocent women and children in Gaza and in Israel.

It is our hope that the brokered ceasefire will become permanent and not just breathing episodes. To this end we call for intensification of current effort by the international quartet (including one of our own, Egypt) to finding lasting solution to this conflict so that the ordinary people of Palestine and Israel will enjoy their fundamental human rights especially the right to life.

ISSUED IN ACCRA, GHANA THIS 27<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF AUGUST 2014 BY



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