

RESOLUTION NO. 48: THE WAR IN ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

(Original version in English)

The 31st World Congress of Public Services International (PSI) Meeting in Geneva on 14 - 18 October 2023

The 31st Congress of Public Services International expresses its deepest condolences and solidarity to all those civilians who have suffered losses and injuries in Israel and Palestine.

Hamas's brutal attacks on Israel, which have resulted in over one thousand people dead, the taking of hostages and the using of them as human shields, are terrorist actions meant to brutally impact on civilians.

The reaction of Israel to collectively punish the population of Gaza for the actions of Hamas resulting in the indiscriminate killing of civilian Palestinians cannot be justified either.

The denial of water, electricity, medical supplies and humanitarian assistance by Israel to the people of Gaza who have already had to endure a 16 year blockade is a fundamental breach of international law and may constitute a war crime.

As the global union federation organising International Agencies workers, we have learnt with dismay that as of 12th October alone, 11 staff from the WHO, 5 from the ICRC and 12 from the UNRWA have been killed in Gaza.

We demand protection for those workers who will continue to work as employees in public services, health care, water and energy, education, and other key sectors. In addition, the Geneva Convention on the wounded, sick, and civilians must be respected.

As public service workers we are committed to provide access to fundamental human rights. For this reason we think that the international community has to mobilise to stop the conflict, remove the unlawful blockade on Gaza and ensure the respect of human rights for its population, while calling for the release of the Israelis held hostage by Hamas.

At this stage it is difficult to evaluate what consequences the Israeli - Hamas conflict may have on the Middle East's already fragile and troubled situation, but what is sure is that the longer the war lasts, the greater the chance it will spread across the region.

It is time for the international community to take its responsibility, let diplomacy work to stop the war, protect civilians, address the root causes of the Palestine /Israel conflict, including the occupation of the Palestinian territories, and demand the implementation of the UN resolutions for the right of the Palestinians to have a viable state and live in dignity, alongside a secure Israel.