

Dear Friends,

As a result of an unprecedented act of terrorism at the hands of Hamas, Israel has declared a state of war.

Around 6.30am on Saturday October 7th, during the Jewish holiday of Sukkot and Simchat Torah, Palestinian militant groups lead by Hamas, launched a large-scale multi-offensive invasion from the Gaza Strip by land, air and sea, backed by a barrage of over 3,000 rockets.

The militants forced entry into the nearby Israeli settlements and military installations in the south of Israel, invaded homes and targeted a music festival that was being held close by, indiscriminately killing hundreds and injuring thousands.

The death toll currently stands at 900 and at least 2,700 people have been wounded and are being treated in Israeli hospitals around the country, with these figures expected to rise.

Over 130 Israelis have been kidnapped and are being held hostage in Gaza, including the elderly, families, and very young children. Over 750 civilians and soldiers have been reported as missing, their whereabouts still unknown.

Over 300,000 army reservists have been drafted by the military in what has been named the 'Swords of Iron' War, while thousands of Israeli civilians have joined volunteer initiatives, including breast milk donations, blood donations, mental health assistance, financial support, supplying shelter, food, clothes and toiletries for displaced residents from the south, supplying food, toiletries and equipment for the army reservists, and supplying hot meals to hospitals for the wounded and their families among many other initiatives.

There are simply no words to communicate the immense pain and horror that Israel is experiencing. However as always, the Israeli people will remain strong in the face of adversity.

Adv. Leah Wapner
CEO, Israeli Medical Association

Professor Hana Leiba
Chair, IMA World Fellowship