

**PEACE IS A FUNDAMENTAL PREREQUISITE TO HEALTH**  
**14 December 2023**

The Australian Health Promotion Association (AHPA®) calls for an end to the hostilities in the Israel-Gaza crisis, for the preservation of life and action on the prerequisites for health.

Peace is the first and fundamental prerequisite for health as recognised in the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion.<sup>1</sup> As noted by Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization, health and peace are inextricably linked - peace enables health and health enables peace.<sup>2</sup> During war, conflict and violence, all prerequisites for health are jeopardised, evidenced in the current crisis and ongoing conflict.

The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion and subsequent guiding charters and declarations continue to promote this reciprocal relationship, including the Vienna Declaration which called for “peace and freedom from fear of violence, including that within communities and families.”<sup>3</sup> Most recently, the Geneva Charter for Well-being argued that well-being societies are underpinned by the principles of human rights, social and environmental justice, solidarity, gender and inter-generational equity, and peace.<sup>4</sup>

As noted by Abuelaish and colleagues, “Health is always positively or negatively affected by conflict; peace can be directly or indirectly fostered through public health program and policy initiatives”.<sup>5</sup> The Health Promotion workforce can and should play an important role in promoting peace, supporting action to preserve life, and advocate for action on the underlying determinants of conflict and war.<sup>6</sup>

AHPA condemns the significant loss of life threat to life and health as a result of the conflict and calls for a peaceful and immediate resolution to hostilities. All governments must act to protect the health, wellbeing, and basic human rights for those involved in the conflict, indirectly or directly.

-ENDS-

**More information**

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<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization. 2023. *Health Promotion*. <https://www.who.int/teams/health-promotion/enhanced-wellbeing/first-global-conference>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.who.int/initiatives/who-health-and-peace-initiative>

<sup>3</sup> [https://ephconference.eu/repository/publications/Vienna\\_Declaration\\_final\\_version.pdf](https://ephconference.eu/repository/publications/Vienna_Declaration_final_version.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/health-promotion/geneva-charter-4-march-2022.pdf?sfvrsn=f55dec7\\_21&download=true](https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/health-promotion/geneva-charter-4-march-2022.pdf?sfvrsn=f55dec7_21&download=true)

<sup>5</sup> Abuelaish I, Goodstadt MS, Mouhaffel R. 2020. Interdependence between health and peace: a call for a new paradigm, *Health Promotion International*, Volume 35:6, 1590–1600. <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapro/daaa023>

<sup>6</sup> Tilford S. 2018. Health promotion and peace. *International Journal of Health Promotion and Education*, 56:3, 176-178, DOI: [10.1080/14635240.2018.1451029](https://doi.org/10.1080/14635240.2018.1451029)

