



Group of Jewish, Palestinian, Islamic and Christian Communities Issues Statement Conflict Leads to Collaboration

16.06.2002

Ongoing Middle Eastern conflict has led to representatives from the Jewish, Palestinian, Islamic and Christian communities working together to promote respect and harmony among all New Zealanders - regardless of faith. A Joint statement.

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Wellington, New Zealand - Ongoing Middle Eastern conflict has led to representatives from the Jewish, Palestinian, Islamic and Christian communities working together to promote respect and harmony among all New Zealanders - regardless of faith.

A joint statement released by the group today expressed their sorrow over all the innocent lives lost in the conflict and also their hope of seeing a peaceful end to the conflict.

The group said that, while they understand that the current conflict is complex and can only be solved by a sustainable resolution acceptable to all parties, they are adamant that they will not allow that conflict to interfere with their sense of respect and their peaceful relations with one another here in New Zealand. 'Respect and tolerance for others and the generally harmonious relations amongst our different communities are positive features of the character of New Zealand while ignorant racist behaviour is in the minority'.

'However, New Zealanders must remain committed to protecting and promoting respect and harmony and to staying vigilant against bigotry and racism - including anti-Jewish and anti-Islamic sentiments.'

Race Relations Commissioner Gregory Fortuin supported the group's initiative and urged New Zealanders to pursue the path of education and constructive engagement.

'We all have a responsibility to avoid the trap of stereotyping and guilt by association and this requires knowledge and making an effort to understand. It is time we did this and graduated from merely tolerating each other to mutually respecting each other.'

The group is made up of representatives of the New Zealand Jewish Council, the Palestinian community, the Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand and the Conference of Churches in Aotearoa New Zealand. It is based in Wellington.

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