

The Society for the Study of Peace, Conflict, and Violence
Division 48 of the American Psychological Association

Peace Psychologists Call for End to U.S. Role in the Violence in Iran and Lebanon

This statement was approved by the Executive Committee of the Society for the Study of Peace, Conflict, and Violence on March 31, 2026. It does not represent the position of the American Psychological Association or any of its other Divisions or subunits.

Recognizing that the concerns expressed here are not unique to peace psychologists alone, our Society welcomes support and endorsement of this statement from other APA divisions and allied groups.

As peace psychologists, we are compelled to speak out against the role of the United States in the violence in Iran and Lebanon that is causing a humanitarian crisis and global economic insecurity. The ongoing assault has interrupted diplomatic efforts and has put a staggering strain on international stability. We cannot remain silent as the U.S. and its allies expose millions of civilians to military operations that destroy schools, health care facilities, and essential infrastructure, often forcing untold numbers of families and individuals to leave their homes to seek refuge. We recognize that in addition to Iran and Lebanon, devastating and civilian-terrorizing human rights abuses rage in other countries in the Middle East, Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas, and we urge the U.S. and its allies to refrain from any precipitating or exacerbating role in this violence as well.

Our professional ethics instruct us to respect the worth and dignity of all people. Our area of specialization, built on decades of psychological research and practice, teaches us that military aggression and large-scale violence are consistently associated with immense human suffering and long-term psychological harm. Such actions are rarely, if ever, the foundation for durable, just resolutions to conflict, or for peaceful coexistence thereafter. While recognizing the contributing roles of complex political circumstances, governance failures, and flawed leadership, escalating violence is highly likely to aggravate these conditions rather than resolve them. Research in peace psychology emphasizes that mass violence has predictable and devastating consequences for the mental health, social cohesion, and intergenerational well-being of civilian populations.

Before the destruction grows even worse, we call for an immediate end to the violence to prevent further loss of life and destruction. Progress toward recovery will be slow for devastated communities, and that difficult process cannot begin too soon. We call upon world leaders and the people they represent to act with urgency to protect human life. Where appropriate, we urge the application of psychological science in support of harm reduction and trauma-informed healing. We encourage our colleagues who would speak out against other atrocities of war, and who support evidence-based pathways toward sustainable peace, to demand an end to this catastrophic aggression that is most clearly in our domain of collective responsibility.

Resources:

American Psychological Association. (2017). APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct. <https://www.apa.org/ethics/code/ethics-code-2017.pdf>

American Psychological Association. (2021). APA Resolution on APA, Psychology, and Human Rights. <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/resolution-psychology-human-rights.pdf>

American Psychological Association. (August 2024). APA Statement Calling for an Immediate, Permanent, and Comprehensive Ceasefire in the Israel-Gaza Conflict. <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/statementglobal-ceasefire.pdf>

American Psychological Association. (February 2025). APA Policy Statement on Justice, Human Rights, Fairness, and Dignity. <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/justice-human-rights>

American Psychological Association. (February 2026). APA Policy Statement on Reaffirming APA's Commitment to Human Rights and Freedom of Expression. <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/statement-human-rights-freedomexpression.pdf>

Christie, D. J., Wagner, R. V., & Winter, D. D. N. (Eds.). (2001). *Peace, Conflict, and Violence: Peace Psychology for the 21st Century*. Prentice Hall/Pearson Education. <https://u.osu.edu/christie/about/peaceconflict-and-violence-peace-psychology-for-the-21st-century/>

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (December 23, 2025). Myanmar: Türk warns against violence and intimidation ahead of military-controlled vote. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/12/myanmar-turk-warns-against-violence-and-intimidationahead-military>

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (January 3, 2026). Venezuela: UN Fact-Finding Mission expresses grave concern following US military intervention and calls for accountability for human rights violations and crimes. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2026/01/venezuela-un-fact-finding-missionexpresses-grave-concern-following-us>

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (January 13, 2026). Situation of human rights in the Sudan. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/ahrc6124-situation-human-rights-sudanreport-united-nations-high>

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (March 12, 2026). UN experts denounce aggression on Iran and Lebanon, warn of devastating regional escalation. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/pressreleases/2026/03/un-experts-denounce-aggression-iran-andlebanon-warn-devastating-regional>

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (March 17, 2026). Israel's settlement expansion drives mass displacement in West Bank. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2026/03/israelssettlement-expansion-drives-mass-displacement-west-bank-un-report>

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (March 26, 2026). Ukraine: danger is only increasing, warns UN human rights office. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/03/1167201>

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (April 8, 2026). Türk condemns deadly wave of Israeli strikes on Lebanon. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2026/04/turk-condemns-deadly-waveisraeli-strikes-lebanon>

May 19, 2026