

POSITION STATEMENT: HARM REDUCTION NURSES STAND AGAINST GENOCIDE IN SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINIAN HEALTH, DIGNITY, AND JUSTICE



Harm Reduction
Nurses Association

Association des
infirmiers et infirmières
en réduction des méfaits

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The ongoing crisis in Palestine of destruction, dehumanization and suffering is consistent with the hallmarks of genocide. In November 2024, the UN Special Committee officially recognized the crisis in Gaza as a genocide, [citing evidence](#) of intentional death, starvation, and serious injury of Palestinian civilians through extensive bombing that has decimated basic infrastructure (e.g. food, sanitation, shelter, health systems), [targeted killings of civilians and aid workers](#), and obstruction of humanitarian aid. Despite the current ceasefire in Gaza, human rights organizations continue to sound the alarm on humanitarian crises [across Occupied Palestinian Territories](#), furthering a decades-long apartheid.

The Harm Reduction Nurses Association represents over 250 nurses and allied individuals nationally. We bear witness to the ongoing public health crises of a toxic drug supply, escalating poverty, displacement, and homelessness— all of which are deeply connected to historical, ongoing, and international processes of settler colonialism. Part of our mission is to work to address the structural conditions that create harm—by acknowledging injustice, resisting oppressive systems, and promoting health equity.

We have failed to formalize our solidarity with Palestinian healthcare workers and civilians to date. Today, we are compelled to [join the calls of the Canadian Nurses for Justice in Palestine \(CNJP\)](#) for every nursing organization, union, association, and institution to acknowledge the genocide and participate in Palestinian solidarity campaigns. We commend the leadership of the CNJP along with the many voices of human rights organizations and [healthcare workers in Palestine](#) and [internationally](#) towards ending forced displacement, starvation, mass casualties of [civilians and health care workers](#), and destruction of

healthcare facilities and infrastructure in violation of international humanitarian law.

Nurses are ethically obligated to “uphold principles of justice by safeguarding human rights, equity, and fairness and by promoting the public good” (CNA, 2017, p.15). In solidarity with the Canadian Nurses for Justice in Palestine, the HRNA commits to the following actions in support of Palestinian struggles for freedom, justice and equality:

1 **RECOGNIZING AND NAMING THE GENOCIDE:**

We commit to recognizing and utilizing the terminology of ‘genocide’ from here forward in all HRNA discourse. We call upon Canadian media outlets, governments, nursing and harm reduction organizations and associations to also use this terminology. It is important to understand the ongoing, intentional, and systemic nature of genocide which cannot be resolved through a ceasefire alone. The ongoing Palestinian genocide is a devastating reflection of settler colonial violence—a process we know will continue to harm generations of Palestinian civilians and healthcareworkers beyond the current ceasefire.

2 **CALLING FOR FEDERAL ACTION:** We urge the federal government to support the Palestinian right to self-determination and sovereignty and for a permanent and complete arms-embargo on Israel.

3 **SUPPORTING AND AMPLIFYING PALESTINIAN-LED MOVEMENTS:** We commit to align our future budgets with [Boycott, Divest, Sanctions \(BDS\)](#) guidelines. We also encourage our membership and all nursing and harm reduction organizations to support the BDS movement.

In 2025, it is more important than ever that nurses across Turtle Island recognize genocide and settler colonialism as a global crisis. As nurses, we must be intentional with our words and actions if we purport to uphold principles of justice towards health and human rights for all.

Harm Reduction Nurses Association/Association des infirmiers et infirmières en réduction des méfaits

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