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— OF —
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Dear Prof Mezzich

On behalf of all College members around the world, and in particular our members of the Middle East Division, we are writing to ask that the WPA and all its constituent member societies urge policy makers around the world to call for an end to violence against civilians in the indiscriminate manner displayed in Lebanon, Israel and Palestine.

As psychiatrists, we have a duty to raise global awareness of the devastating effect of such hostilities on the psychological welfare of our communities. As signatories to the WPA Cairo declaration on mass violence and mental health, we recognize that violence, such as war or terrorism, does not help to solve the problems but "causes many deaths, material losses and mental health problems in the lives of the survivors and in the population at large".

As the humanitarian situation deteriorates further amid continuing fighting, the words of the Cairo Declaration become particularly pertinent: "...unless properly addressed, the psychosocial consequences of violence will negatively affect future generations and can destroy the social cohesion that allows people to live together in harmony".

The WPA, an organization representing a global psychiatric community, has a particular responsibility and ability to respond to the needs of those who are most vulnerable in our societies. The current destructive policies will have long-term adverse effects, particularly on the wellbeing of children and young people growing up in this violent and volatile environment. We therefore urge you to call upon the international community and its leaders to do everything in their powers to end the current hostilities with immediate effect and to work towards lasting peace in the Middle East.

Best wishes,

Prof Sheila Hollins
President

Prof Hamid Ghodse
Director of International Affairs

Encl. Cairo Declaration

CC: WPA Secretary General
WPA Member Societies
College members of the Middle East Division ✓