



Press Release on Gaza situation

Strasbourg, 14/07/2014

Normally, EMISCO - European Muslim Initiative for Social Cohesion does not take sides in territorial conflicts, condemn or support any given country nor do we issue statements of intent in political disputes outside Europe.

We work for the socio-economic, cultural and religious rights of the Muslim communities as well as the betterment of relations among various ethnic and religious groups who live in Europe.

But when a far away conflict in the Middle East reaches European shores and causes disharmony, violence – verbal and physical – and disturbs peaceful living, we cannot stay silent.

EMISCO is very worried that the increased violence, indiscriminate killings and labelling of a territorial conflict, as a religious issue will have dire consequences for Muslim and Jewish communities in Europe.

The present violent situation in Gaza and Israel has already resulted in anti-Semitic and Islamophobic incidents in some parts of Europe and on Social media, hefty debates are raging between native Europeans, ethnic and religious minorities with very harsh tone and discomfoting rhetoric. An escalating conflict in the Middle East would surely make our living together in peace, even harder than before.

That is why, EMISCO strongly urges EU, Council of Europe, OSCE and the international community through UN, to not wait too long but stop this madness now.

We also request the European mainstream media, not to take sides with any party in the conflict but instead report the events impartially and professionally so that public views are not further prejudiced or enraged.

The NGOs and political leadership in Europe should also refrain from xenophobic statements and taking one-sided positions.

Finally, while we are aware of the anger and frustrations, Muslim and Jewish brothers and sisters must be feeling, we appeal to them to be extra cautious in venting their anger and not add to the problem while expressing their views.

In this time of tremendous suffering and fear, from Jerusalem to Gaza, and from Hebron to Be'er Sheva, all Israelis and Palestinians deserve security, justice, and equality and European Muslim and Jewish communities need to support all the efforts to halt the violence.

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