

FGC, PYM, AFSC, FCNL Joint Statement in Response to Military Attacks on Afghanistan From the General and Executive Secretaries of Four Quaker Organizations

We pray at this time for the people of the United States, Afghanistan, and the rest of the world. We hold in prayer those killed and wounded in the terrorist attacks of September 11, those being killed and wounded by the military strikes on Afghanistan that began on October 7, and all who grieve for them.

We regret the decision by our nation's leaders to launch military strikes against Afghanistan, and we call upon them to halt the bombing and other military attacks.

We recognize the responsibility of the international community to apprehend and try, under international law, those responsible for the recent terrorist attacks. We urge that such efforts be undertaken as a law enforcement action not as acts of war and with great care to avoid the killing or injuring of innocent people.

History teaches us that violence leads to more violence. We expect that these massive military strikes by missiles and bombers against this already devastated, starving country will almost certainly make it easier for the leaders of this terrorist struggle to recruit more people to their cause. We must break the cycle of escalating violence.

The struggle against terrorism will indeed be long. To succeed, it will have to undermine the ability of those who would use terrorism to recruit new people to carry out such attacks. This requires ending, or greatly diminishing, the tremendous anger and hatred toward the United States and its allies felt, in particular, by many in the Muslim and Arab world. This can only be done with prolonged, nonviolent efforts for reconciliation, justice, and long-term economic development. It cannot be done through massive bombing and military attacks.

As executives of organizations of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), we continue to be guided by our historic testimony concerning God's call to renounce war and seek peace. We commit ourselves to work and pray for the time of justice and peace promised by God when "peoples shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; and nations shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." (Isaiah 2:4)

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