

## Ukraine and Gaza: civil spaces must remain inviolable even in war

*Development and Peace — Caritas Canada denounces the targeting of civil spaces in the wars in Ukraine and Gaza and reiterates the call for immediate, just and lasting peace.*

MONTREAL, July 11, 2024 — [Development and Peace — Caritas Canada](#) vehemently denounces the targeting of civil spaces in the wars in Ukraine and Gaza.

On Monday, July 8, 2024, a missile widely believed to be Russian struck the Okhmatdyt Children’s Hospital in Kyiv, Ukraine, [reportedly](#) killing two adults, including a doctor, and injuring 50 people, including eight children. Since February 2022, there have been [over 1,400 attacks on health care facilities](#) across Ukraine.

On July 7, 2024, Israeli occupation forces [bombed the Holy Family School](#) in Gaza, killing at least four people. The attack was [decried by the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem](#), which runs the school where hundreds of civilians were sheltering. Four schools have been targeted just [since the last weekend](#), and already a month ago, [over 500 schools had been damaged or destroyed](#). This is not to mention the [1,300+ attacks on health care facilities](#) and the frequent closures of hospitals—including Al-Ahli Arab Hospital on Monday—on the Israeli army’s orders.

These developments validate Pope Francis’s [January 2024 observation](#) that “In a context where it appears that the distinction between military and civil targets is no longer respected, there is no conflict that does not end up in some way indiscriminately striking the civilian population. The events in Ukraine and Gaza are clear proof of this.”

Per a [UN report](#), over 11,200 civilians have been killed and more than 22,500 have been injured since Russia invaded Ukraine. The situation is even worse in Gaza, where the [official toll](#) of Israel’s relentless attacks over the last nine months stands at 38,193 Palestinians killed and 87,903 injured.

“Schools, universities, churches, mosque, hospitals, refugee camps... these are all sacrosanct,” said Carl Hétu, executive director of Development and Peace — Caritas Canada. He added “The brutal war crime of attacking such civilian spaces must stop right now. That is why we are calling for immediate ceasefires in both Ukraine and Gaza. Canada must work with the international community to bring about just and lasting peace for the Ukrainian and Palestinian people.”

The generosity of Canadians has allowed Development and Peace — Caritas Canada to support local partners in Ukraine and its neighbouring countries and in the Holy Land in delivering vital aid and services to thousands of conflict-affected people. We are accepting **donations for Ukraine and Gaza** online ([click a button below](#)), on the phone at **1-888-234-8533** and by mail at the **address in the footer**.

- 30 -

[GIVE FOR UKRAINE](#)

[GIVE FOR GAZA](#)

## **About Development and Peace — Caritas Canada**

*Development and Peace — Caritas Canada is the official international development organization of the Catholic Church in Canada. It works in partnership with local organizations in over 30 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin American and the Middle East to create greater justice in the world and to act in solidarity with the most vulnerable people.*

---

For more information, contact:

### **Minaz Kerawala**

Communications and Public Relations Advisor

Development and Peace — Caritas Canada

514 257-8710 ext. 328 | [mkerawala@devp.org](mailto:mkerawala@devp.org)

---

---

555 René Lévesque Blvd. W., 8th floor, Montreal (Quebec) H2Z 1B1

Tel: 514 257-8711 | Fax: 514 257-8497 | Toll-free: 1-888-234-8533

[info@devp.org](mailto:info@devp.org) | [www.devp.org](http://www.devp.org)