

ISA STATEMENT CONDEMNING THE ESCALATION OF WAR AND VIOLENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

April 2026

The International Sociological Association (ISA), in accordance with its Statutes and its commitment to the defense of human dignity, academic freedom, and the advancement of sociological knowledge, strongly condemns the escalation of military actions carried out by the United States and Israel in the Middle East, particularly those affecting Iran and Lebanon.

Ongoing military actions, including attacks on civilian populations and critical infrastructure—such as schools, hospitals, universities, historical monuments, and energy infrastructure—are causing severe human suffering and undermining the conditions necessary for social and academic life. As highlighted by sociological communities in the region, these events are directly affecting the capacity to teach, research, and sustain institutional life under conditions of extreme uncertainty and risk.

The ISA recalls that the use of force against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states violates fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. In this regard, United Nations human rights experts have characterized recent military actions carried out by the United States and Israel as violations of international law and acts of aggression, warning of the risks of impunity for powerful states and the devastating consequences for civilian populations.

These assessments underscore the urgency of reaffirming international legal principles and protecting human life in the face of escalating militarization. The normalization of such actions poses a grave threat not only to regional stability but to the basic conditions of human coexistence globally.

The ISA also condemns restrictions on fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and academic freedom, across the countries involved, including the recent repression of protests and restrictions on academic and civic life in Iran, which have significantly affected university communities and the conditions for sociological work. These limitations cannot be justified under any circumstances. Rather than addressing them, the escalation of war risks reinforcing authoritarian practices, as conditions of conflict are often used to restrict dissent, control populations, and limit democratic life.



From a sociological perspective, these dynamics are embedded in long-standing global inequalities and asymmetries of power, as well as in geopolitical and economic interests that shape contemporary conflict. The persistence of militarized and interventionist strategies reflects deeper structural conditions that reproduce violence unevenly across regions, disproportionately affecting populations already exposed to multiple vulnerabilities. These dynamics are further entangled with Israel's ongoing occupation of Palestinian territories and the Syrian Golan Heights—as recognized by international humanitarian law (notably the Fourth Geneva Convention) and by multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions (including Resolutions 242 and 2334)—which has been identified as a contributing factor to recurring cycles of violence and instability.

In light of this situation, the ISA:

- condemns the ongoing military actions carried out by the United States and Israel in the region;
- calls for the immediate cessation of hostilities and for measures to protect civilian populations;
- urges all parties to comply with international law and humanitarian principles;
- stresses the necessity of dialogue, diplomacy, and peaceful conflict resolution as the only legitimate path forward.

The ISA further calls upon sociological associations worldwide to uphold and promote the values of peace, dialogue, and international cooperation, and to contribute, through research, teaching, and public engagement, to the defense of human life and the strengthening of democratic and peaceful societies.

The ISA also emphasizes the need for all countries to critically examine the structural conditions that enable such conflicts, including global inequalities, economic interests, and enduring forms of domination that shape contemporary warfare.

As a global community of sociologists, we reaffirm our commitment to the defense of life in all its dimensions—human, social, and ecological—and to the promotion of more just, peaceful, and sustainable societies.