

**To all leaders of Palestinian military, paramilitary and guerrilla organizations;  
to all soldiers of Palestinian militant groups:**

My name is Marek Edelman. I am a former Deputy Commander of the Jewish Military Organization in Poland and one of the leaders of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. In the memorable year of 1943 we fought for the survival of the Jewish community in Warsaw. We fought for mere life, not for territory, nor for a national identity. We fought with hopeless determination, but our weapons were never directed against the defenceless civilian population, we never killed women and children. In the world devoid of principles and values, despite a constant danger of death, we did remain faithful to these values and moral principles.

We were isolated in our fight, and yet the powerful opposing army was not able to destroy these barely armed boys and girls. Our fight in Warsaw lasted several weeks, and later we fought in the partisan groups and in the Warsaw Uprising of 1944.

Yet nowhere in the world can urban guerrilla force bring a conclusive victory, but it cannot be defeated by well-armed armies either. And this war will not bring any resolution. Blood will be spilled in vain and lives will be lost on both sides.

We were never careless with life. We never sent our soldiers to certain death. Life is one for eternity. Nobody has the right to mindlessly take it away. It is high time for everybody to understand that.

Just look around you. Look at Ireland. After 50 years of bloody war, peace has arrived. The former deadly enemies sat down at a common table. Look at Poland, at Walesa and Kuron. Without a single shot being fired the criminal communist system was defeated. Both you and the State of Israel have to radically change your attitude. You have to want peace in order to save the lives of hundreds or perhaps thousands of people, and to create a better future for your loved ones, for your children. I know from my own experience that the current unfolding of events depends on you, the Military Leaders. The influence of political and civilian actors is much smaller. Some of you studied at the university in my city, some of you know me. You are wise and intelligent enough to understand that without peace there is no future for Palestine, and that peace can be attained only at the cost of both sides agreeing to some concessions.

I also ask President Bill Clinton, Minister Bernard Kouchner and MP Daniel Cohn-Bendit to endorse my appeal. I want to remind you our joint position on the Yugoslavia war. Maybe this war, in which there will be no winners, can also be stopped and replaced by negotiations leading to peace. Maybe the best mediator would not be a politician but a person of a high moral authority, who values each man's life in dignity and peace higher than political goals.

*Marek Edelman, August 2002*