

Open letter from NI civil society on the human rights violations being committed in Gaza

To the UK Government and Parliament:

We, the undersigned civil society organisations and individuals, call on the UK Government and Parliament to voice its support for all necessary immediate action to stop the ongoing human rights violations and breaches of international law that are being committed in Gaza. We call on the UK Government to adhere to international law in its public statements; refrain from abetting violations of international law; indicate support for the United Nations Security Council Resolution calling for a ceasefire; and contribute to the provision of humanitarian aid.

We endorse the United Nations' unequivocal condemnation of the targeted and deadly violence directed at civilians in Israel and the violent and indiscriminate attacks against Palestinian civilians in Gaza, accompanied by a further tightening of the unlawful blockade, all of which is having a devastating impact on the whole civilian population.

We are now watching in horror as civilians, in particular children and young people, are being killed and injured as a result of the disproportionate attacks by Israel Defence Forces. The indiscriminate attacks on civilian lives and infrastructures within Gaza, the deprivation of food, water, fuel supplies, and medicines, and use of collective punishment is in grave breach of international law.

We call upon you to take urgent steps to help ensure humanitarian supplies are provided to those in Gaza and the safe return of hostages to Israel.

As UK political leaders with influence on a global scale, you cannot stand on the sidelines and speak platitudes about these atrocities. You must act to protect civilian lives. The UK cannot continue to provide moral, financial, or military support to an Israeli government that dehumanises residents in Gaza as 'human animals' and commits war crimes with impunity. It must also act to stop other governments providing assistance in support of these war crimes and breaches of international law.

The signatories of this letter refuse to remain quiet while we watch these atrocities take place, and we will not. The lesson from the Northern Ireland conflict is very stark. The only way to achieve peace is through respect for all human life and the application of the rule of law. Both of which are absent from the unfolding conflict in Gaza.

We also call upon you to ensure that all disinformation and misinformation on social media platforms, and other media outlets, about the attacks in Israel and Gaza, that constitutes propaganda for war, is immediately addressed to prevent further escalation of heightened tensions.

Palestinian lives matter.

The letter was signed by more than 300 individuals and organisations.

Please send any correspondence in response to the letter to Robyn Scott, CAJ Communications and Equality Coalition Coordinator, on robyn@caj.org.uk.