

Dear Members of Parliament,

As humanitarian, human rights and campaigning agencies, many of us with teams operating in Gaza and the West Bank, we are writing to draw your urgent attention to the critical situation in Gaza. As you may be aware, there will be a vote tomorrow (Wednesday 21 February 2024) in the House of Commons regarding this matter. **We, along with 71% of the UK public**, urge you to support the motion for an immediate and permanent ceasefire to benefit everyone in Israel and Palestine, facilitate the provision of adequate humanitarian assistance, and the release of hostages, and curtail the risk of regional conflict amid multiple strikes in several countries.

In Gaza, the ongoing conflict has resulted in unfathomable death and destruction. At least 28,576 Palestinians have been killed, while thousands remain missing under the rubble of destroyed buildings.

The humanitarian situation is dire. For 135 days, the UN and NGOs have warned of a shortage of medical supplies and clean water, overcrowded shelters, widespread food insecurity, and a collapsing healthcare system and spread of diseases among the displaced civilians, resulting in catastrophic health indicators and urgent humanitarian needs. Nearly every child is at imminent risk of starvation and malnutrition, women resort to using scraps of tent in place of period products and go weeks without showering, and surgeons are operating on patients without sufficient anaesthesia. Unexploded ordnance resulting from the bombardment poses a serious risk both to civilians and humanitarian aid workers.

Humanitarian response agencies need to **not only restore but significantly scale up the delivery of vital health, education, mental health, protection, and livelihoods services**. This includes vital programming to support the unique and urgent needs of women and men, boys and girls, mainstreaming inclusion of people with disabilities, older people, and others disproportionately affected by the crisis. **This is not possible under bombardment. We need a lasting ceasefire, not 'pauses'**. Without a lasting ceasefire, humanitarian organisations cannot re-establish principled operations on the necessary scale, and there will be further loss of life.

It is imperative that the UK Government takes immediate action to support an immediate and permanent ceasefire, for which there is [growing international consensus](#). The protection of civilians is paramount and a requirement under international humanitarian law.

An immediate and permanent ceasefire will halt the cycle of violence, facilitate the release of all hostages, allow for the restoration of essential services, allow for international humanitarian assistance to reach those in need, and provide an opportunity for dialogue and negotiation towards a lasting peace that benefits everyone in the region.

We cannot afford to delay any longer. Private diplomacy and cautious statements are not enough - stronger action and accountability needs to be applied or the humanitarian catastrophe will likely surpass even the horrors we have seen over the last four months.

We urge you to support the motion for an immediate ceasefire.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. We look forward to your support and swift action.

Signed:

1. Action Against Hunger
2. Action For Humanity
3. ActionAid UK
4. Age International
5. Amnesty International UK
6. Amos Trust
7. Bond
8. Council for Arab-British Understanding (Caabu)
9. CAFOD
10. CARE International UK
11. Christian Aid
12. Climate Action Network UK (CAN-UK)
13. Convivencia Alliance
14. Development Initiatives
15. Elrha
16. Embrace the Middle East
17. European Centre for the Responsibility to Protect
18. Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS)
19. Greenpeace UK
20. Humanity & Inclusion UK
21. Inminds Human Rights Group
22. International Alert
23. International Health Partners (IHP)
24. International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)
25. International Rescue Committee UK
26. Islamic Relief UK
27. Jewish Network for Palestine
28. Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights
29. Mercy Corps
30. Mines Advisory Group (MAG)
31. Minority Rights Group
32. Muslim Aid
33. Muslim Community Helpline
34. Muslim Hands
35. Na'amod
36. Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)
37. Omega Research Foundation
38. Oxfam GB
39. Peace Direct
40. Peacemaker Trust
41. Penny Appeal
42. Plan International UK
43. Protection Approaches
44. Quakers in Britain
45. Resistance Kitchen
46. Sabeel-Kairos UK
47. Saferworld
48. Save the Children UK
49. Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF)
50. Scotland's International Development Alliance
51. Stamp Out Poverty

52. Tearfund
53. Trócaire
54. The UK Committee for UNICEF (UNICEF UK)
55. UK-Palestine Mental Health Network
56. United Nations Association - UK (UNA-UK)
57. War Child
58. War on Want
59. Welfare Association
60. Womankind Worldwide
61. Women for Women International
62. Women's Platform