



Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

UK Section Limited Company number 14007981

52-54 Featherstone Street London EC1Y 8RT

020 7250 1968 | ukwilpf.peace@gmail.com | www.wilpf.org.uk

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Consultative
Status with
United Nations
ECOSOC,
UNCTAD and
UNESCO

Special
Consultative
Relations
with FAO,
ILO and
UNICEF

4 April 2024

Dear Prime Minister

UK government can – and must – halt the horrors unfolding in Gaza

WILPF (the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom) requires that you take urgent and immediate action that can halt the horrors currently unfolding in Gaza. It is your responsibility on behalf of the people of the United Kingdom (over 75% of whom support a ceasefire in Gaza)¹ – and your duty to the world – to take the action that can de-escalate an appalling situation that will never be resolved by force.

As an NGO with over 100 years of experience opposing war and seeking to address the root causes of conflict, WILPF women know that, at this critical time, the UK government could exert influence over the government of Israel.

The actions of the Israel Defence Force (IDF) have repeatedly violated International Humanitarian Law, the Law of Armed Conflict and the Geneva Convention, by failing to protect and safeguard civilians and healthcare workers, and appearing to ignore positive obligations of the laws of distinction and discrimination. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- repeatedly targeting a convoy of volunteers (World Central Kitchen) whose role is simply to provide food to the starving population of Gaza²
- attacking foreign medical facilities (Medical Aid for Palestinians and Médecins Sans Frontières)
- shooting children, as reported by doctors present³

These are all depraved actions with no moral, legal or strategic rationale.

The UK has become complicit in the State of Israel's military policies, by continuing to sell arms to Israel, despite the ICJ warning that Israel's actions could plausibly meet the criteria for genocide. This concern is shared and reiterated by over 600 UK lawyers and judges.⁴

The UK must stop all arms sales and arms transfers (however small) immediately or become legally accountable. Telling the world why the UK government must take this action could influence our allies and allow the UK to be respected on the world stage, ensuring the safety of the people of Palestine, the UK and promoting global peace and security.

Yours in peace

Paula Shaw, National Secretary, for WILPF UK Executive Committee

The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
Prime Minister
Cabinet Office
70 Whitehall
London SW1A 2AS

1 Brendan O'Hara, Ceasefire in Gaza, Volume 745: debated on Wednesday 21 February 2024, <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2024-02-21/debates/610A4D12-A333-4885-9D0B-0A225C35C043/CeasefireInGaza>

2 BBC, World Central Kitchen halts operations in Gaza after strike kills staff, 2 April 2024, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-68710515>

3 Guardian, 'Not a normal war': doctors say children have been targeted by Israeli snipers in Gaza, 3 April 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/apr/02/gaza-palestinian-children-killed-idf-israel-war>

4 Open Letter, 3 April 2024, UK Judges' and Lawyers' Open Letter Concerning Gaza, <https://lawyersletter.uk/>



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The Rt Hon Lord Cameron
Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

¹ Brendan O'Hara, Ceasefire in Gaza, Volume 745: debated on Wednesday 21 February 2024, <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2024-02-21/debates/610A4D12-A333-4885-9D0B-0A225C35C043/CeasefireInGaza>

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The Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP
Secretary of State for Defence
Ministry of Defence
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB

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