



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Lord Cameron
Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development
Affairs.

18th December 2023

Dear David,

We were dismayed to see the United Kingdom abstain on the resolution calling for a ceasefire in Israel and Gaza at the United Nations General Assembly last week, when most of our allies such as France, Canada and Australia had voted in support. We were however encouraged by your calls for a “sustainable ceasefire by both sides” yesterday.

The case for a ceasefire seems to us to be unanswerable with many thousands of civilians dead and injured, and close to two million forcibly displaced. Thousands of bodies must surely still lie under the rubble. In particular, the number of women and children who have been killed is profoundly shocking. As you have said yourself, too many Palestinians have died.

As the Palestinian population is kettled into ever smaller areas, disease is spreading, and starvation is imminent. By any measure we are witnessing a catastrophe of precisely the kind the 1949 Geneva Conventions were supposed to prevent. As such, it is unconscionable that we should make Gaza an exception to the rules and obligations those accords created.

As you might know, over the last few weeks we have all privately expressed our anguish and dismay at the position taken by His Majesty’s government following the terrible atrocities of October 7th. We said we did not believe it was in the United Kingdom’s or Israel’s best long-term interests for them to flatten Gaza and massacre innocent Palestinians in pursuit of Hamas, nor that there was a viable military solution to dealing with such a terrorist organisation and to securing the urgent return of Israeli hostages. On the contrary, the

brutalization of the civilian Palestinian population is sure to lead to more extremism in the future.

Furthermore, it is increasingly clear that the Israeli military strategy is neither proportionate nor targeted and that there is no serious prospect of success, whatever that might mean.

The conduct of the Israeli military on the ground is also coming under increasing scrutiny. There are allegations of “safe areas” being bombed. Last week reports emerged of execution-style killings of women and children at a UN school and on Friday the IDF shot and killed three hostages carrying a white flag.

Middle East analysts warn that regional tensions are rising in response to the appalling scenes in Gaza, and the prospect of a wider conflagration, either by accident or design, seems dangerously real.

It is widely accepted across the world that lasting security for Israel, peace for the Palestinians, an end to the killing, and the defeat of Hamas, can only be achieved through politics and diplomacy and the establishment of two states.

We therefore urge you to recognise that space must be created for the emergence of a new political reality, and that space requires an immediate ceasefire.

Yours sincerely,

The Rt Hon Kit Malthouse MP

Flick Drummond MP

The Rt Hon David Jones MP

The Rt Hon Vicky Ford MP

Paul Bristow MP

Mark Garnier MP

The Rt Hon Kelly Tolhurst MP

The Rt Hon George Eustice MP

Derek Thomas MP

The Rt Hon Philip Dunne MP