



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

Our Ref: SC19427

13 October 2023

Dear Foreign Secretary,

I have been watching with horror the escalating violence and mounting civilian death toll in Israel and Gaza. Nothing can ever justify the deliberate targeting of civilians, indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks, collective punishment or hostage taking.

Hamas' shocking killings and abductions demonstrated a flagrant and sickening disregard for life and for international law and cannot be justified under any circumstances. There can also be no justification for collective punishment. As you are aware, Israeli airstrikes have been killing families and destroying whole neighbourhoods. The Israeli government has cut Gaza off from all water, food, electricity and fuel, and hospitals have run out of capacity to treat victims. I am deeply concerned by the Israeli order to evacuate over a million Palestinians from northern Gaza in less than 24 hours, a move that would amount to the forced transfer of population which is prohibited under international humanitarian law. Civilians in Israel and Gaza right now are profoundly traumatized and both sides in the armed conflict are threatening more and worse violence.

I urge you in the strongest terms to urgently:

- Speak out and exercise every diplomatic effort to ensure the evacuation called upon Gaza is rescinded, in line with UN calls, and for every possible action to be taken to prevent further harm to the people of Gaza. This must include all parties agreeing to an urgent ceasefire, to allow emergency aid to be delivered in Gaza, and for there to be unfettered medical and humanitarian access.
- Condition the UK Government's support for Israel on its strict observance of international humanitarian law, which is the strongest legal tool at the disposal of the international community to protect civilian life.
- Commit to not cut aid to the Palestinian people. The civilian population of Gaza are already on their knees and without support more Palestinian civilians will be left to die.

Sarah Champion

Member of Parliament for Rotherham

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I am terrified this cycle of violence will not end, and innocent people will continue to pay the price.

This means that the above urgent actions to deescalate and protect all civilian lives must also be complemented by UK Government support for a revitalised political process to secure a viable peace process leading to a two-state solution.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'S. Champion'.

Sarah Champion MP
Member of Parliament for Rotherham