

STOPAIDS. UNITING UK VOICES ON THE GLOBAL RESPONSE

The Rt Hon James Cleverly MP

Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs

Westminster

SW1A 0AA

October 20th 2023

Dear Secretary of State James Cleverly,

We write as a group of UK-based organisations and individuals working on health rights. We demand that the UK Government push for an immediate ceasefire in the Israel-Gaza conflict and uphold its diplomatic responsibility to ensure sufficient access to health and humanitarian assistance for all people in Gaza.

We echo the demands as previously stated by the [World Health Organisation](#) (WHO), [Oxfam and Medical Aid for Palestinians \(MAP\)](#) and countless other humanitarian groups.

There is no justification for violence towards any civilians. Those held captive must be released and the brutality on both sides must end. In Gaza that violence is not only in the form of armed conflict but also in the shutting-off of water, electricity and the prevention of aid reaching civilians within the Gaza Strip. On top of this, the forced evacuation order to over one million people would cram 2.2 million into 60% of the total area of Gaza with no access to basic services or humanitarian support. [Only three litres of water a day per person is now available](#). The World Health Organisation recommends one person needs between 50-100 litres of water each day to meet basic health requirements. Without clean water and sanitation services there is a massive risk of outbreaks of deadly infectious diseases, like cholera, and death from dehydration.

The bombing of al-Ahli Arab hospital which killed hundreds of people - patients who were unable to move and civilians who were seeking safety - on Tuesday evening is abhorrent. Other hospitals in Gaza running on generators could soon run out of fuel. The [United Nations Population Fund \(UNPF\)](#) estimates that there are 50,000 pregnant women in Gaza with 5,500 due to give birth in the next month. These mothers and their babies face extreme challenges due to a lack of safe delivery services and life-saving medical supplies on top of the threat of injury and death from the ongoing conflict. In addition, food is scarce - even before the attacks began on October 7th, [63% of people in Gaza](#) were food insecure and dependent on international assistance.

It is critical to also mention the psychological damage that people living in Gaza, including children - who make up 50% of the population in Gaza - have faced since the blockade. A study published last year indicated that [95% of children living in Gaza](#) showed signs of trauma, depression and anxiety. Many have witnessed family members being killed, these psychological scars of war will never leave these children.

Clean water, food, fuel and medical assistance is essential to avoid the further catastrophic loss of life. We call on you, and the rest of the Cabinet to protect the health rights of all those in Gaza - demand an immediate ceasefire, end collective punishment, ensure safe routes for adequate humanitarian aid and address the root causes of this ongoing conflict to avoid further escalation and catastrophe in the region.

Registered office: STOPAIDS, 167-169 Great Portland Street, 5th Floor, London, W1W 5PF

www.stopaids.org.uk | mike@stopaids.org.uk | +447734087950

Company Number: 2589198; Charity Number: 1113204

Yours Sincerely,

Organisations

STOPAIDS

Health Poverty Action

Global Justice Now

Just Treatment

Medact

Mother Mother Psychotherapy

Nurses United

Salamander Trust

Sophia Forum

Universities Allies for Essential Medicines UK

Individuals

Dr Sara Alsaraf – NHS worker

Flora Bailey – NHS worker

Dr Mohga Kamal-Yanni - Global Health and Access to Medicines Consultant

Ameen Kamlana – NHS worker

Sreedevi Nair – NHS worker