

URGENT

28 October 2024

The Prime Minister, Rt Hon Keir Starmer MP
The Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Affairs, Rt Hon David Lammy MP

Sent by email to:

keir.starmer.mp@parliament.uk, <https://contact.no10.gov.uk/>
david.lammy.mp@parliament.uk, fcdo.correspondence@fcdo.gov.uk,

Dear Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary,

We write to you as the trustees of the Welfare Association, a UK charity dedicated to supporting Palestinians in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) and Lebanon. Our core work is in the fields of healthcare, education, community development and, in times of conflict, emergency and humanitarian relief. Over the last year most of our resources have been directed to the latter. Meanwhile our existing projects in Gaza have been destroyed and our projects in the West Bank and Lebanon have likewise come under attack.

While we welcome the steps taken by your Government, including the restoration of funding to UNRWA, the withdrawal of the UK's submission to the ICC, the suspension of some arms licenses and the introduction of sanctions on a handful of settlers, the reality is that these measures have done nothing to assist us in carrying out our mandate, including emergency and humanitarian relief.

As you have recognised, the situation in Gaza is catastrophic. In the north, civilians are being starved and deprived of water and medical assistance. Across the rest of Gaza, civilians are barely surviving and women and children are disproportionately impacted. The level of suffering is intolerable.

As you have already concluded Israel, as the Occupying Power, is failing to ensure the delivery and distribution of supplies essential to the survival of the population. It is in your power to change this, and we urge you to use that power to compel Israel to conform with its obligations. Time is running out and words are no longer sufficient.

Accordingly, we ask that you:

- announce further individual sanctions but on ministers, not just settlers;
- suspend all arms licenses and withdraw all operational support for Israel's military operations in Gaza;
- announce a trade embargo in respect of all goods/produce from the OPT; and
- formally recognise Palestine, thereby strengthening in law the rights of all Palestinians.

Yours sincerely

Welfare Association (UK)' Board of Trustees:

Martin Linton (Chairman), Julia Helou (Treasurer), Hanan Al-Afifi, Louise Arimatsu, Andrew Karney, Sarkis Nehme, Michael Kenny, Ian Martin, Hatem Kamal.
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