**ISRAEL GAZA CONFLICT**

In the light of the recent shocking events in Israel and Gaza, it is vital that we promote the important message of respect for international law, and condemn the killing of civilians and collective punishment, both of which are forbidden under international law. We urge all our members and supporters to take write letters and emails to the media (Guardian, Manchester Evening News etc). You could also write to your MP, to the Prime Minister and other ministers, to local Councillors and to other public figures. Please refer to the points below when composing your letters and emails.

LETTERS AND EMAILS

Here are some suggested points, expressed in different ways, to raise in your letters and emails. You can mention Amnesty International if you wish.

We urge all parties, including the international community to work to stop the bloodshed.

ILLEGAL ACTS

We condemn the inhuman and illegal attacks by Hamas on Israeli civilians and the holding of civilian hostages.

We condemn Israel’s retaliatory attacks, using the force of its powerful military indiscriminately against the trapped Palestinian civilian population.

We condemn the collective punishment by Israel of the civilian population of Gaza. This is forbidden under international law.

We condemn the indiscriminate heavy bombardment of the Gaza Strip, and the cutting off of energy, food, medical and water supplies which amplifies the daily suffering of a trapped population that has already endured extreme hardship through years of Israeli blockade.

The number of casualties is rising as the violence continues, and it is once again civilians paying the price for the failure to end the occupation and the cycle of violence it facilitates.

RESPECT FOR LAW

We call on Palestinian armed groups and Israel to make every effort to protect the lives of civilians in the fighting in Israel and Gaza and make every effort to avoid further civilian bloodshed.

Under international humanitarian law all sides in a conflict have a clear obligation to protect the lives of civilians caught up in the hostilities. All parties must live up to these obligations.

All perpetrators of human rights violations and war crimes must be held to account.

Deliberately targeting civilians, carrying out disproportionate attacks, and indiscriminate attacks which kill or injure civilians are war crimes.

The abduction of civilians and hostage-taking are prohibited by international law and can constitute war crimes.

DEMANDS

All civilians held hostage must be released immediately, unconditionally, and unharmed. All those held captive must be treated humanely, in accordance with international law and granted medical treatment.

The root causes of the repeated cycles of violence must be addressed as a matter of urgency. This requires upholding international law and ending Israel’s 16-year-long illegal blockade on Gaza, the Illegal Occupation of the West Bank, and all other aspects of Israel’s system of apartheid imposed on all Palestinians.

The international community has failed to hold Israel to account for its decades-long violations of international law. The cycle of violence must stop, Israel’s illegal occupation must end, and the rights of all people must be respected.