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7th May 2025

Open Letter

Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,
10 Downing Street
London
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Dear Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer

Over the last year and a half, we have written multiple letters to your predecessor and to members of your government, most recently to your Foreign Secretary David Lammy, detailing our first-hand observations of the medical and humanitarian catastrophes currently being inflicted on people in Gaza. What we are seeing is consistent with the description of ethnic cleansing and genocide provided by legal experts and human rights organisations.

On the website gazainsidethewar.com we have compiled information and testimony collected by Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) teams that extensively documents the total war waged by Israeli forces since October 2023, which has destroyed the very conditions of life in Gaza. This platform documents the multiple attacks on the healthcare system and humanitarian workers that MSF teams have witnessed and suffered. As you are aware, healthcare workers and healthcare structures are protected under International Humanitarian Law.

We are now entering a third month of total siege of Gaza imposed by the Israeli authorities, including a complete blockade on humanitarian supplies and food entering the Strip. The Israeli authorities, as an occupying power under International Humanitarian Law, are obligated to protect civilians in Gaza and ensure their basic needs are met, yet for the last two months have been flagrantly refusing to abide by those obligations. Starvation and collective punishment of an entire population are clearly and openly being used as a weapon of war.

We have this weekend seen a proposal from the Israeli government for a militarily controlled aid mechanism. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) has declared that this proposal would amount to a deliberate instrumentalization and weaponisation of aid and would result in further large-scale forced displacement. Like the UN, MSF will not be complicit with a proposal for aid delivery to be controlled by the very people who have consistently used the control of aid as a weapon of war against the civilian population of Gaza. Regardless of negotiations between warring parties, humanitarian assistance to civilians should never be used as a bargaining chip.

Our most recent letter to your Foreign Secretary, sent over a month ago following one month of the Israeli-imposed blockade, remains unanswered. Meanwhile, the catastrophe continues to accelerate. The devastation is beyond words.

As the President and Executive Director of MSF in the UK, we are once again writing to you to uphold the UK's obligations as a permanent member of the UN Security Council to act under International Humanitarian Law to protect all civilians in Gaza under the Responsibility to Protect framework. We also call on you, as the Prime Minister of this country, to publicly condemn the Israeli government for the atrocities it is inflicting on the people of Gaza. Failure to take immediate action and to adopt a clear position on these extensively documented and flagrant breaches of international law leaves the UK government at high risk of charges of complicity. The survival of more than two million Palestinians in Gaza hangs in the balance.

Yours sincerely



Dr Rachael Craven
President, MSF UK



Dr Natalie Roberts
Executive Director, MSF UK

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Rt Hon David Lammy Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs