



October 2023

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about the situation in Gaza. The events we have seen unfolding in Israel are truly horrific. I join the UK Government in utterly condemning the barbaric terrorist attacks perpetrated by Hamas, and in standing with Israel as it seeks to defend itself in the face of such atrocities.

The UK recognises the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people and supports a lasting solution for Israelis and Palestinians alike. However, Hamas does not represent the Palestinian people or their aspirations; it offers nothing for them other than more terror and more bloodshed. I therefore support Israel's right to take back the hostages, deter further incursions and strengthen its security for the long term.

The loss of every innocent life is a tragedy, and the above must be done in line with international humanitarian law, with every effort made to minimise the impact on ordinary Palestinians. While acknowledging that Hamas has enmeshed itself behind the civilian population of Gaza, the UK Prime Minister has called on and will continue to call on the Israeli Government to take every possible precaution to avoid harming civilians.

The rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza is also extremely troubling.

The UK has long been a significant provider of humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people, and I welcome that on the 16th October, the UK Government announced that it will increase aid by a third, with an additional £10 million of support. Furthermore, the UK has deployed significant military support to the region to help facilitate the humanitarian response and mitigate escalation of the conflict.

It is also vital that the international community works together to relieve the impact on civilians, a point the UK Prime Minister emphasised during his meeting with the Prime Minister of Sweden ahead of the Joint Expeditionary Force Summit in Gotland on the 13th October. I understand that he has also spoken with the Egyptian President to underscore the importance of opening the Rafah crossing to allow for humanitarian access and provide a route for British and other nationals to leave Gaza.

UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office officials have also been closely engaged with UN efforts to secure humanitarian access and scale up the response.



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The terrorist attacks perpetrated by Hamas are heinous and unprecedented, and I firmly support Israel's right to defend itself, as guaranteed by Article 51 of the United Nations

Charter. The UK recognises that Hamas does not represent the Palestinian people and has made it clear to the Israeli Government that efforts to go after Hamas and deter further incursions must be done in line with international humanitarian law, with every effort taken to protect civilians.

I appreciate the concerns for healthcare providers in Gaza. As mentioned, the UK Government announced that it will increase aid by a third, with an additional £10 million of support. Ministers will establish how best that money can be used to help those who need it as quickly as possible.

The explosion at the Al Ahli hospital has caused devastating loss of life. It is a tragedy on a scale that is difficult to comprehend.

The UK is now working with our allies to urgently establish what happened and should not rush to judgement. Speculation and incorrect accusations could put more lives at risk.

In the meantime, this incident only reinforces the importance of getting humanitarian relief into Gaza and opening the Rafah crossing. The UK is continuing to work with partners, including Egypt and Israel, to that end.

The UK is working via all diplomatic channels—bilaterally and collectively in the region—to ensure that this conflict, which has cost so many lives already, can be brought to a halt.

However, the reality is that Hamas have no interest in a ceasefire. They have no interest in resolution, have never attempted to engage in a two-state solution and have made every attempt to collapse the Oslo process.

I must reiterate that Israel has the right to take action to defend itself and to recover its hostages, and the UK, while respecting that, will always encourage it to adhere to international law and protect civilians. This is a fast-moving situation, and I will be sure to follow developments closely.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

**CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP**  
**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY**

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