

Women in Black Call for Ceasefire in Gaza

Today we stand with Women in Black, founded by Israeli and Palestinian feminists in Jerusalem in 1988. Coming from a range of backgrounds, our vigil in Brighton today speaks of our heartbreak and anger over the terrible pain caused to Israelis and Palestinians by the 7 October massacre committed by Hamas and the ongoing bombardment of Gaza's two million residents that Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu described (25 October) as "raining hellfire". Atrocities, however terrible, can never justify further atrocities.

We mourn with those who are grieving the loss of beloved friends and family members. We join them in hoping and calling for the survival and safety of the women, girls, boys and men who have been injured, kidnapped, raped, brutalised and terrified in this tragic escalation of a long-standing conflict that undermines the security of all.

An immediate ceasefire and urgent humanitarian and diplomatic action are necessary first steps to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza and build security and peace for the future.

We call on the Israeli government to stop attacking Gaza. Killing, injuring and dispossessing thousands of Palestinian families and depriving them of water, food, electricity and medical facilities will further harm the hostages, not bring them back.

Attacks against children and unarmed non-combatants are prohibited under International Humanitarian Law. This applies to all violators, whoever and wherever they are.

We condemn the corrupt patriarchal leaders, warmongers, bombers and all companies, governments and profiteers who feed the state and non-state violence, nationalism and arms deals that underpin and drive armed conflicts. They are responsible for the ongoing misery and insecurity across the Middle East and beyond. Neither Hamas terrorism nor Israel's nuclear arsenal and military bombardments can provide security, defence or deterrence. Only dialogue, diplomacy and political solutions can bring justice and peace.

Weapons made and sold by the UK government, US, and some Middle East countries are fuelling the violence of terrorists, warlords and governments that violate human rights.

STOP PROFITEERING FROM WEAPONS PROLIFERATION AND ARMED CONFLICTS – END ALL ARMS TRADING AND TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN MISERY

As a moral and humanitarian imperative we call for the UK and all relevant governments and agencies to provide urgent humanitarian aid to Palestinian civilians in Gaza. We urge the UN and relevant governments to enable diplomatic assistance to Israel to bring about the safe return of all the Israeli hostages before it is too late.

More must be done by all of us to save lives and work for peace and justice in the Middle East and all over the world – from the Congo to the Balkans and beyond.

Women in Black, founded in Jerusalem in 1988, is now a world-wide network of women committed to peace with justice; we actively oppose injustice, war, militarism and other forms of violence. Any group of women anywhere in the world at any time may organise a Women in Black vigil against any manifestation of violence, militarism or war. Our actions are nonviolent and generally take the form of women wearing black (if possible) and standing in a public place with leaflets and placards.



Some but not all vigils are silent. WiB London is the longest running regular vigil in the UK, held every Wednesday between 6-7 pm at the Edith Cavell Statue, opposite the National Portrait Gallery, St.Martin's Place, London WC2.



To the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 10 Downing Street, London SW1

We are heartbroken about the terrible pain caused to Israelis and Palestinians by the appalling Hamas attacks on the Israeli Kibbutzim, villages and music festival on 7 October and the ensuing humanitarian catastrophe unleashed by Mr Netanyahu's government on Gaza's two million residents. We abhor all forms of terrorism, antisemitism, islamophobia and racism. Atrocities, however dreadful, cannot justify further atrocities. Military attacks and bombs can never bring about security, deterrence or defence. Only dialogue and political solutions can build sustainable human security, peace and justice.

WE URGE the UK Government to do all you can

- ➔ **to bring about an IMMEDIATE CEASEFIRE in Gaza and provide HUMANITARIAN AID and assistance to save lives, free the hostages, prevent further military attacks and terrorism;**
- ➔ **halt all arms sales to the region;**
- ➔ **engage constructively to support regional political solutions based on a two-state solution to build security, peace and justice for both Israelis and Palestinians.**

Signed.....Date.....

Name:

Address:Postcode