

Gaza's Humanitarian Crisis and the United Nations

Open Letter to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres

By [Canadian Boat to Gaza](#)

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Canadian Boat to Gaza

Region: [Middle East & North Africa, USA](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [Police State & Civil Rights](#), [Poverty & Social Inequality](#), [United Nations](#)

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Dear Secretary General,

On your recent visit to Gaza, you saw with your own eyes some of the deplorable and inhumane conditions suffered by the Palestinians living in Gaza. You called it "one of the most dramatic humanitarian crises" that you had seen. We hope that, backed by the strength of the United Nations, this experience encourages you to bring maximum pressure on the State of Israel to lift the illegal and inhumane blockade the people of Gaza have been living under for ten years.

We want to remind you that there are many civil society and religious groups around the world who are watching the worsening situation in horror. We are depending on the United Nations, under your leadership, to work at the international level to increase the pressure from all nation states to use every economic and political measure to remind the State of Israel of the standards expected of the civilized nations of the world.

We are also pleased that you noticed specifically that the blockade on Gaza's southern border with Egypt is upheld by that Arab state in defiance of both international resolutions and a sense of solidarity with a fellow Arab people. Israel is imposing the blockade not only by land, but also by air. They have destroyed Gaza airport, which was financed with international aid (including from Spain). At sea, Israeli forces attack Palestinian fishers from Gaza on a daily basis. They also illegally attack international vessels that challenge the blockade non-violently in the Freedom Flotilla missions that have taken place since 2010.

There are political reasons that make a resolution to the crisis of Gaza imperative at the international level. But even more important are the humanitarian reasons to release an entire people from the appalling situation in which they are currently forced to live.

Your own officers and researchers have concluded that Gaza will be uninhabitable by 2020. Many other reports, including those by the UN, [OCHA](#) have documented the many threats to the health and even the survival of people in Gaza. The UN has drawn particular attention to the power deficit. Since April 2017 access to electricity is often for four hours or less per day and always unpredictable. Power cuts make sewage treatment impossible leading to pollution of the beaches. Attacks on inshore fishers deprive the people of access to the nutritional value of fish. Your own research has shown up to 57% of Gaza people are '[food insecure](#)'. Not only is the Gaza economy paralyzed by the blockade, but restrictions on entry of building materials makes it very difficult to reconstruct bombed schools, for example. The

blockade also restricts entry of school supplies and other goods that pose no threat to Israel whatsoever. This entire generation of children and young people in Gaza are growing up without the minimum to develop into educated and well-nourished adults.

The situation is so serious that you have announced an emergency grant of \$4 million. But the Palestinians of Gaza do not want to have to take emergency payouts; they want – and need – a cessation of Israeli aggression and real international peace-keeping to prevent further aggression. The so-called “Middle East Quartet” has been a disaster, accomplishing nothing and whitewashing Israeli violation of international law and the breaking of numerous agreements. The State of Israel has also ignored countless UN resolutions aimed at curtailing its activities, as well as continuing the illegal blockade of Gaza and the harassment of its fishing fleets.

In other words, despite its good intentions, the UN has a deplorable record in effectively safeguarding the Palestinians of Gaza and in promoting their security and independence.

We call on you to immediately:

Demand that the State of Israel complies with all UN resolutions, with the threat of sanctions if it does not do so.

Disband the Middle East Quartet and replace it with an effective oversight body.

Resume real peace keeping and effective protection of the civil population of Gaza.

Insist that the State of Israel respects and conforms with all UN resolutions that relate to its relations with Gaza.

Ensure that the world knows that the blockade is illegal and should demand that it be removed immediately.

Sincerely and persistently.

(list of signing organizations, below**)

Freedom Flotilla Coalition Member and Partner Organizations: freedomflotilla.org

Canadian Boat to Gaza canadaboatgaza.org

Freedom Flotilla Italy www.freedomflotilla.it

MyCARE Malaysia www.mycare.org.my

Kia Ora Gaza [New Zealand / Aotearoa] kiaoragaza.wordpress.com

Palestine Solidarity Alliance [South Africa] www.palestinesa.co.za

Rumbo a Gaza [Spain] www.rumboagaza.org

Ship to Gaza Norway www.shiptogaza.no

Ship to Gaza Sweden shiptogaza.se

International Committee for Breaking the Siege of Gaza en.breakgazasiege.org

US Boat to Gaza womensbo.attogaza.us

Miles of Smiles miles-smiles.org

Free Gaza Australia [www.facebook.com/ GazaAustralia](http://www.facebook.com/GazaAustralia)

Other Organizations

Gaza Action Ireland gazaactionireland.weebly.com

Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign www.ipsc.ie

ShannonWatch (Ireland) www.shannonwatch.org

Plateforme des ONG françaises pour la Palestine plateforme-palestine.org

Council of Canadians / Conseil des Canadiens canadians.org

Bestemødre For Fred (Grandmothers For Peace, Norway) www.bestemodreforfred.com

Veterans for Peace (US) www.veteransforpeace.org

CODEPINK: Women for Peace (US) codepink.org

Voice of Women for Peace (Canada) vowpeace.org

Collectif Judéo Arabe et Citoyen pour la Palestine www.facebook.com/CJACPalestine

Palestina Solidariteit (Belgium) www.palestinasolidariteit.be

Association France Palestine Solidarité www.france-palestine.org

Cultura e libertà (Italy) palestinaculturaliberta.wordpress.com

Alternative refugee Center (Switzerland)

Badil resource center for Palestinian residency and refugee rights (Switzerland)
www.badil.org/en

Women for development (Switzerland)

Union Juive Française pour la Paix (France) www.ujfp.org

Deutsch-Palästinensische Gesellschaft dpg-netz.de

Frauen in Schwarz (Vienna, Austria) www.facebook.com/pg/fraueninschwarzwien

Netherlands Palestine Committee www.palestina-komitee.nl

Palestijnse Gemeenschap in Nederland

Nederlands Arabische Stichting (Netherlands)

TIYE International (Netherlands) www.tiye-international.org/wordpress

Diensten en Onderzoek Centrum Palestina (Netherlands) www.docp.nl

Stop Represión Málaga, Voces Alternativas, Kontrapunto (Spain)

Breed Platform Palestina (Haarlem, Netherlands)

Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (Gaza, Palestine) pchrgaza.org

Asociación de la Comunidad Hispano-Palestina “Jerusalén”

Asociación Medica Hispano Palestina (Spain)

Asociación Pablo de la Torriente Brau

El movimiento de mujeres palestinas Alkarama www.alkarama.es

RESCOP – Network of Solidarity against the occupation of Palestine (with 49 member organizations in Spain)

Pertubuhan IKRAM Malaysia (Malaysia) www.ikram.org.my

Viva Palestina Malaysia www.vpm.org.my

BDS Malaysia bdsmalaysia.com

Persatuan Ulama Malaysia pum.org.my

Al-Quds Foundation Malaysia alqudsmalaysia.org

Association of Norwegian NGOs for Palestine palestina.no

Asociación Española para el Derecho Internacional de los Derechos Humanos aedidh.org/es

Parallelo Palestina (Italy) sites.google.com/site/parallel-opalestina

Canadian BDS Coalition bdscoalition.ca

Palestine Solidarity Network (Edmonton, Canada) psnedmonton.ca

People for Peace (London, Canada)

United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel (UNJPPI) www.unjppi.org

Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR), Canada www.usw.ca/act/activism/soar

Boundary Peace Initiative boundarypeace.20m.com

Mid-Islanders for Justice and Peace in the Middle East midislanders.com

Palestine Solidarity Working Group (Sudbury, Canada)

B.C. Southern Interior Peace Coalition (Canada)

Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid (Victoria, Canada) caivictoria.ca

Hawai'i Peace and Justice www.wp.hawaiipeaceandjustice.org

Hawai'i Coalition for Justice in Palestine
www.facebook.com/HawaiiCoalition4JusticeInPalestine

Malu 'Aina Center for Nonviolence Education malu-aina.org

Break the Maritime Blockade of Gaza (BMBG)

EBN – End Blockade Now

Association des Universitaires pour le Respect du Droit International en Palestine
www.aurdip.fr

Collectif inter-universitaire pour la coopération avec les universités palestiniennes
www.aurdip.fr/_cicup-35_.html

Comité de Vigilance pour une Paix Réelle au Proche-Orient plateforme-palestine.org/Comite-de-Vigilance-pour-une-Paix-Reelle-au-Proche-Orient

Comité La Courneuve-Palestine (France) lacourneuve-palestine.fr

Zambra Málaga www.asociacionzambra.org

Confederación General de Trabajadores: Huelva, Málaga, Osuna (Spain)
www.cgtandalucia.org

Christian Peacemaker Teams (Palestine) www.cptpalestine.com

Independent Jewish Voices / Voix juives indépendantes (Canada) ijvcanada.org

Palestinian Forum in Britain PFB

Europal Forum (UK) europalforum.org.uk

BDS Colombia

BDS Slovenia

New Zealand Palestine Solidarity Network (Aotearoa / NZ) www.palestinesolidaritynz.net

Palestine Human Rights Campaign (Aotearoa / NZ) palestine.org.nz

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