

Motion against Israel's attacks on Gaza

This union notes:

1. The scale of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza since Israel began its economic and import blockade in June 2007.
2. That, on 9th July 2004, the International Court of Justice ruled that the Israeli settlements on the West Bank contravened International law.
3. That, in late January 2006, following their victory in democratic Parliamentary elections, the Palestinian Government of Hamas offered a ten year truce (hudna) to Israel in exchange to an end to the occupation of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and Gaza. This would amount to a "defacto" recognition of the right of the state of Israel to exist within its defined 1967 borders under International Law.¹
4. That, on 23rd February 2008, the mayor of the Israeli town of Sderot, which has received most rocket attacks said he is ready to talk to Hamas and accept a ten year ceasefire, despite bans on talking to Hamas by the Government of Israel.²
5. That the last ceasefire was broken by Israel by "the killing of six Palestinian militants in Gaza by Israeli forces in a ground incursion and air strikes on 4 November" (as reported by Amnesty International)³. This violation of the ceasefire by Israel is regarded as the start of the recent violence, including the retaliatory rocket fire.
6. As a result of Israel's attacks on Gaza, more than 1,300 Palestinians, including 410 children and over 100 women have been killed. 13 Israelis have also been killed – 3 of whom were civilians.
7. The indiscriminate bombings by Israeli forces of fundamental infrastructure which destroyed 4,000 buildings and damaged 20,000.⁴
8. That Israeli shells hit the UN headquarters as well as two UN schools and that the UN Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon described the attacks as 'outrageous and totally unacceptable'.
9. The attacks have seriously damaged much of Gaza's education system in what Oxford University academic Karma Nabulsi has termed "scholasticide". Israel has bombed the ministry of education, the Islamic University of Gaza, the University Teachers' Association of Gaza and tens of schools.⁵
10. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and foreign journalists who have gone into Gaza since the operation ended say they have found evidence of the use of white phosphorus in crowded residential areas. It is a war crime to use white phosphorus in residential areas as it can burn victims alive and survivors are left with painful wounds which take long to heal.
11. The ongoing devastation in Gaza where 50,000 and now homeless and 400,000 are without running water as a result of the attacks.⁶
12. That South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu has accused Israel of practising apartheid in its policies towards the Palestinians.
13. That UCL Union is twinned with two Palestinian universities: Al-Quds University in East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Al-Azhar University, Gaza.

This union notes further:

1. That Britain sold armaments worth over £19 million to Israel in the first three months of 2008⁷
2. That Britain continues to hold normal diplomatic relations with Israel.
3. That the Venezuelan government has expelled the Israeli ambassador in solidarity with the Palestinian people.

¹ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2006/nov/01/israel>

² [Israeli mayor of bombarded border town offers to break ranks and talk to Hamas, *The Guardian*](http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/feb/23/israeli-mayor-of-bombarded-border-town-offers-to-break-ranks-and-talk-to-hamas)

³ <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE15/045/2008/en/fee17499-ab4e-11dd-a4cd-bfa0fdea9647/mde150452008en.pdf>

⁴ http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/7839863.stm

⁵ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jan/10/gaza-schools>

⁶ http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/7839863.stm

⁷ <http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/briefings/snias-04931.pdf>

4. That, on January 16th 2009 hundreds of academics (including 12 from UCL) submitted a letter to The Guardian stating:
5. *'We must do what we can to stop Israel from winning its war. Israel must accept that its security depends on justice and peaceful coexistence with its neighbours, and not upon the criminal use of force.'*
6. *We believe Israel should immediately and unconditionally end its assault on Gaza, end the occupation of the West Bank, and abandon all claims to possess or control territory beyond its 1967 borders. We call on the British government and the British people to take all feasible steps to oblige Israel to comply with these demands, starting with a programme of boycott, divestment and sanctions.'* See full letter appendix 1
7. That students at SOAS, LSE, KCL, Leeds, Manchester, Warwick, Oxford, Birmingham, Cambridge, Sussex and Essex have occupied university buildings in solidarity with the people of Gaza – and some have won demands which will improve the lives of Palestinians.
8. That hundreds of thousands of people have attended demonstrations to protest Israel's actions across the UK and the world including Jewish organisations such as Jews for Justice for Palestinians.

This union believes:

1. That the actions of the Israeli state in so far as it relates to the education of Palestinian students is ethically wrong.
2. That the British government should immediately stop arms purchases and sales to and from Israel, in line with the Union's ethical investment policy.
3. That UCL has a responsibility to condemn Israel's attacks on Gaza.

This union resolves:

1. To call for Israel to fully open the borders and end the long siege of Gaza. Restoration of full supplies of food, fuel, medical supplies. For the delivery of aid to support education.
2. To mandate the Academic Affairs officer (AAO) to write a letter to the Provost on behalf of the union outlining the Union's beliefs and demanding he condemn Israel's attacks on Gaza, as well as demanding that old books and computers are sent to universities in Gaza and scholarships offered to Palestinian students.
3. To mandate the Academic Affairs Officer (AAO) to lobby UCL Council via Provost to establish an exchange between UCL students and the students in Al-Quds University (West Bank) and Al-Azhar (Gaza). The first objective is to attempt to bring a delegation of students from the university to UCL next academic year to talk on their experiences. The AAO should report to students before every UCL Union General Meeting about progress made on twinning.
4. To mandate the AAO to send an email to the UCL Director of Finance, requesting a copy of UCL's investment portfolio.
5. the AAO to write to the [UCL Ethical Investment Review Committee](#) to remove stocks that sustain the illegal Israeli occupation of the Occupied Palestinian Territories since 1967 once the information is received from the Director of Finance. Specifically, stocks that are in arms companies that fund the Israeli military. All correspondence must be made accessible to the student body by request. The AAO must post feedback on UCL Union Noticeboard about progress by the next General Meeting of UCL Union.
6. To mandate the AAO to organise the placement of a wooden placard in the UCL Union building stating "UCL Union is twinned with Al-Quds University (West Bank) and Al-Azhar University (Gaza)"
7. To reaffirm the resolves section of "Emergency Motion on Occupied Palestinian Territories" (See UCLU Policy File)
8. To offer public and material support for protests against Israeli aggression towards Gaza by mandating the Communications & Services Officer to publicise in weekly emails all relevant demonstrations, occupations and events in solidarity with Palestine happening across London. And to arrange fortnightly meetings between the

Communications & Services Officer and students involved in societies which campaign in solidarity with Palestine (UCLU Stop the War and UCLU Friends of Palestine) to inform the officer about upcoming events.

9. To mandate all UCLU delegates to NUS conference to vote for resolutions which echo this one in condemning Israel's actions up to this date (3 February 2009) as unjustifiable.
10. To mandate the Communications & Services Officer to put an advert for the DEC Gaza aid appeal on the union website and in an email to all students as long as it continues.

11. Appendix 1

12. Letter to the Guardian by hundreds of academics including 12 from UCL (shown below)
13. *The massacres in Gaza are the latest phase of a war that Israel has been waging against the people of Palestine for more than 60 years. The goal of this war has never changed: to use overwhelming military power to eradicate the Palestinians as a political force, one capable of resisting Israel's ongoing appropriation of their land and resources. Israel's war against the Palestinians has turned Gaza and the West Bank into a pair of gigantic political prisons. There is nothing symmetrical about this war in terms of principles, tactics or consequences. Israel is responsible for launching and intensifying it, and for ending the most recent lull in hostilities.*
14. *Israel must lose. It is not enough to call for another ceasefire, or more humanitarian assistance. It is not enough to urge the renewal of dialogue and to acknowledge the concerns and suffering of both sides. If we believe in the principle of democratic self-determination, if we affirm the right to resist military aggression and colonial occupation, then we are obliged to take sides... against Israel, and with the people of Gaza and the West Bank.*
15. *We must do what we can to stop Israel from winning its war. Israel must accept that its security depends on justice and peaceful coexistence with its neighbours, and not upon the criminal use of force.*
16. *We believe Israel should immediately and unconditionally end its assault on Gaza, end the occupation of the West Bank, and abandon all claims to possess or control territory beyond its 1967 borders. We call on the British government and the British people to take all feasible steps to oblige Israel to comply with these demands, starting with a programme of boycott, divestment and sanctions.*
17. Professor Celia Britton, French
18. Professor Charles Brook, Paediatric Endocrinology
19. Dr. Judit Druks, Psychology & Language Science
20. Professor Ted Honderich, Philosophy
21. Professor Richard Hudson, Linguistics
22. Dr. Cecile Laborde, Political Science
23. Professor Andrew Leak, French
24. Dr. Saladin Meckled-Garcia, Human Rights Studies
25. Dr. George Paizis, French
26. Professor Jane Rendell, Architecture
27. Professor Neil Smith (emeritus), Linguistics
28. Sean Wallis, Survey of English Usage