

## **MOTION TO EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL**

**27 February 2024**

### **Motion to Call for a Ceasefire in Gaza and for the UK Government to Reinststate UNRWA Funding**

East Lothian Council notes the ongoing humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza, with 28,000 civilians dead and 2 million people now at risk of starvation as a result of Israeli military action. More than half of the population of Gaza is aged under 18.

East Lothian Council:

- Condemns the Hamas attack of October 7<sup>th</sup> and calls for the immediate release of all hostages;
- Equally, condemns the indiscriminate bombardment of Gaza by the Israeli Defence Force;
- Stands in solidarity with all victims of this violence and urges an immediate ceasefire to avoid further suffering.

Council notes that the UK is among several major donors to the UNRWA who have unilaterally suspended funding to this agency because of unverified reports that a small number of their staff may have been involved in the Hamas attack. This Council notes that 152 UNRWA staff have been killed while working in Gaza since October 7<sup>th</sup> 2023, and that a recent statement from 28 aid agencies warns that the withdrawal of funding for UNRWA threatens a complete collapse of the already restricted humanitarian response in Gaza.

Council further notes that the interim verdict of the International Court for Justice in the case brought by South Africa against Israel, places six binding actions on Israel, including to do all it can to prevent genocide, refraining from harming or killing Palestinians, urgently getting basic aid to Gaza, and to punish any incitement to genocide.

This Council condemns genocide and considers that the Court ruling places obligations on UK institutions, including government at all levels, to ensure they are avoiding any action which may directly or indirectly support genocide.

Accordingly, Council:

- asks the Leader of the Council to write to the First Minister, asking him to do everything within devolved powers to stop the supply of weapons and components from Scotland to Israel (and its allies); and to ask the FM for an update on the progress of the commitment he made during First Minister's Questions on November 16<sup>th</sup>, when he undertook to examine what more could be done to exclude companies who profit from the illegal occupation of the West Bank from public procurement contracts in Scotland

- also asks the Leader of the Council to write to the Foreign Secretary, welcoming his recent indication that he is considering recognising Palestine as a state, but also urging him to immediately reinstate the UK's funding for UNRWA and to join the list of nations supporting South Africa's case against Israel in the International Court of Justice.

Proposed by (name): Shona McIntosh

Date: 15 February 2024

Seconded by (name): Lee-Anne Menzies

Date: 15 February 2024

Received by (name of officer): Linda Gillie and Lel Gillingwater, Team Managers,  
Democratic and Licensing

Date: 15 February 2024