



Right Hon William Hague MP
Foreign Secretary
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
City of Westminster SW1A 2AH

[Email: private.office@fco.gov.uk](mailto:private.office@fco.gov.uk)

For the attention of: Right Hon William Hague MP

18 December 2012

Dear Mr. Hague,

Re: Yarmouk refugee camp, Syria

As lawyers committed to the protection and promotion of Palestinian human rights, we urge the British government to take all necessary diplomatic measures to achieve the urgent cessation of the use of force against civilians in the Palestinian refugee camp of Yarmouk, and to ensure that all parties engaged in the conflict adhere to their binding legal obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

Following weeks of increasingly intense fighting, the air rocket attack of 16 December 2012 has thrown the camp into chaos, with credible reports of significant numbers of civilian deaths, injury and damage to property. Further, this escalation of fighting has given rise to massive displacement of the civilian population creating large numbers of internally displaced people and refugees.

We are gravely concerned about the safety of the Palestinian population, across Syria and particularly around Damascus. We consider there to be a substantial risk that the Palestinian population will be the victims of widespread, systematic and gross human rights violations, which may amount to crimes against humanity.

We therefore urge the British government to take all necessary steps to ensure that all parties to the conflict immediately and unconditionally fulfil their binding legal obligations for the protection of all civilians in Syria. Such action should include working unilaterally and together with other governments to convene a special session of the Human Rights Council at which states can make clear that all alleged gross human rights violations will be subject to full international investigations and that universal jurisdiction will be exercised wherever appropriate, and to convene an urgent meeting of the Security Council for the purpose of referring the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic to the International Criminal Court.

lawyers for palestinian
human rights



Yours sincerely,

Andrea Becker and Rachel Waller
Co-Chairs, Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights