

[Print](#)[Close](#)

UN Commission of Inquiry report on the 2014 conflict in Gaza

From: **AINAGCorrespondence@fco.gov.uk**

Sent: 29 July 2015 15:52:33

To: **lphr@live.co.uk**

Our reference: EMOP/314/2015

29 July 2015

Dear Mr Shourou,

Thank you for your email of 2 July to the Foreign Secretary about the UN Commission of Inquiry report on the 2014 conflict in Gaza. The Near East Department in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has been asked to reply.

The UK is deeply concerned by the terrible human cost, to both sides, of the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as underlined by the findings of the UN Commission of Inquiry report on the 2014 conflict in Gaza. The report underscores the critical importance of achieving a negotiated two-state solution that ends the conflict once and for all.

The British Government strongly condemn the indiscriminate firing of rockets into Israel by Hamas and other militant groups in Gaza. Such actions, as well as use of civilians as human shields, use of UN premises and schools for military purposes, and the firing of rockets from civilian areas are serious violations of international humanitarian law.

We are clear that Israel has the right to defend itself against indiscriminate attacks. It is also a principle of international humanitarian law that the use of force in self defence must be proportionate. International humanitarian law requires belligerents to distinguish between military and civilian targets. We have urged both sides to this conflict to act in a manner that is proportionate, to take all measures to prevent the loss of civilian life, and to comply with International Humanitarian Law.

We note that the UN Commission of Inquiry report highlights substantial information pointing to serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law by both parties. It is the UK's firm belief that the allegations in the Commission of Inquiry report must be fully investigated by Israel, the Palestinian Authority and the authorities in Gaza.

We therefore welcome the fact that Israel is conducting its own internal investigations into specific incidents. Where there is evidence of wrongdoing those responsible must be held accountable. It is first for both parties to demonstrate robust and credible internal investigations to this end, in line with international standards.

The UK would have preferred to see a text that gave more weight to Israel's legitimate right to self-defence and the threat she faces from militant groups operating from inside Gaza, including Hamas. However, despite these concerns, we found the resolution to be balanced and appropriate and therefore supported it.

On behalf of the

Near East Department

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Please do not respond to this email address, as replies are routed to an unmonitored mailbox. If you require additional information please go to fcocorrespondence@fco.gov.uk

Visit <http://www.gov.uk/fco> for British foreign policy news and travel advice and <http://blogs.fco.gov.uk> to read our blogs.

This email (with any attachments) is intended for the attention of the addressee(s) only. If you are not the intended recipient, please inform the sender straight away before deleting the message without copying, distributing or disclosing its contents to any other person or organisation.

Unauthorised use, disclosure, storage or copying is not permitted.

Any views or opinions expressed in this e-mail do not necessarily reflect the FCO's policy.

The FCO keeps and uses information in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. Personal information may be released to other UK government departments and public authorities.

All messages sent and received by members of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and its missions overseas may be automatically logged, monitored and/or recorded in accordance with the Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000.

