

Quakers in Lewes  
Friends Meeting House  
Friars Walk  
Lewes  
BN7 2LE

23/10/23

Dear Maria Caulfield MP

### **War in Israel and Palestine**

As Quakers we believe in the sacred worth of each person and stand against violence in all its forms. As Quakers, we mourn all lives lost and remember everyone who is suffering. We see that violence begets more violence.

The Hamas killing of some 1,400 Israeli civilians, and hostage taking, is appalling and unjustifiable. The subsequent Israeli military attack on Gaza has led to the loss of over 4,000 Palestinian lives. Israel's siege of Gaza means that men, women and children have no access to food, water, or electricity. As the UN has stated: "This amounts to collective punishment. There is no justification for violence that indiscriminately targets innocent civilians, whether by Hamas or Israeli forces. This is absolutely prohibited under international law and amounts to a war crime."

The members of Lewes Quaker Meeting ask you as our elected representative to take whatever action you can take to apply pressure on World leaders to act to against this carnage. In particular, we ask that you call publicly for:

- An immediate ceasefire and a release of all hostages
- An independent ICC investigation into all war crimes

The UK government, as a friend to Israel, has an opportunity and a responsibility to hold Israel accountable to its obligations under international law. As hostilities continue, innocent civilians will pay the highest price unless the international community acts. We therefore hope that you can also write urgently to Foreign Secretary James Cleverly MP to call on his Israeli counterpart to:

- Ensure humanitarian access and protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure as mandated under international law.
- Protect all civilians in Gaza from imminent forcible transfer.
- Ensure the UK maintain support and aid to vulnerable Palestinians.

We look forward to learning from what action you have been able to take and what response you have had from the Foreign Secretary.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Martin". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

John Ashcoft, Liz Brooks and David Martin

Clerks of Lewes Quaker Meeting