

Question 1

'What can.. the UK do... to help bring about a ceasefire?'

The responses do not neatly match the questions, there is some overlap.

Summary

- 1. Israel's impunity is a barrier, warm and cold words are ineffective. Action is required to reduce impunity.*
- 2. Majorities want a ceasefire and fair resolution. Government is losing public trust. The devolved governments should be party to a decision on action.*
- 3. Impunity harms the aggressor and has dangerous long term implications. Action to end it can be corrective, not hostile.*
- 4. UK may be in a position to trigger transformative change on this issue*
- 5. The global context and the long term implications make affirmative (assertive) steps to achieve a ceasefire leading to lasting peace urgent and essential.*

1.i The dominant military force or lead aggressor need to be interested in a ceasefire. If there is no interest, we need to create it.

1.ii It seems Israel has yet to show interest in a ceasefire. Its trajectory appears to be to keep expanding its power bases through indiscriminate and targeted destruction.

1.iii Warm words, assertive statements, desperate appeals etc have been tried and have not stimulated interest in a ceasefire. Significant affirmative action has not been tried.

1.iv The UN is theoretically a stronger power, but it is paralysed by a few nations' veto. The UK has been one of these few.

1.v The UK could signal political determination to end impunity by publishing a range of affirmative steps as being under consideration.

Steps can include reducing ties and cooperation in diplomatic, economic, security, cultural and military spheres. sanctions and voting in the UN for military action eg to protect aid deliveries.

1.vi This action (publishing steps as under consideration) will be taken seriously if some steps are taken. The first step should be taken with immediate effect. [A minimum, UK lawyers say, would be to comply with international law](#) by ending all military support and cooperation including arms parts supplies. The justification for continued supply (existing contracts, Ukraine) sounds evasive and unconvincing.

2.i Polls and petitions in the [UK show increasing opposition to Israel's slaughter](#). This is despite most mainstream media backing Israel. The UK government is out of step with the public, and centrally controlled media is ineffective in convincing the majority. This is unusual. What is this doing to trust in government official media?

2.ii The Welsh Senedd was possibly the first government to call for a ceasefire and the SNP and Sinn Fein led governments in Scotland and N.Ireland are renowned for their advocacy for action regarding Israel.

2.iii As taking affirmative action to motivate Israel to negotiate a cease-fire is a significant step in international relations, it is appropriate to first formally discuss and agree it with the devolved governments of the UK.

3.i [A significant minority within Israel are begging us for forceful intervention for a ceasefire](#). An impartial assessment of the long term gains and losses for Israel from its conduct in this war on Palestine would be useful. Impartiality is difficult. Current evidence suggests it is damaging its economy, reputation and its internal harmony and wellbeing.

3.ii Impunity for any nation is unhealthy for it, and risky for the world's family of nations. History is instructive.

3.iii Sanctions tend to be seen as hostile actions as we impose them on nations we view as enemies eg Russia, South America, China. They can be helpful measures to motivate an ally to correct course. Israel's course needs correcting, is the majority view.

4.i The UK could act like a global 'swing state' and through affirmative action, trigger others to join forces to enable the UN to fulfill its global function. Action by the UK will be heeded, not words alone.

4.ii Spain has blocked shipments of arms to Israel. The US response is to investigate Spain. Ireland has recognized Palestine. Israel has withdrawn ambassadors. The more nations take similar measures, the less appetite will Israel or the US have for punishing these actions as the threat of punishment is not effective.

4.iii The US is adopting protectionism as a policy, can it challenge other nations for policies protecting their ethics and legitimacy?

4.iv How will Donald Trump respond? If the UK acts affirmatively, shows leadership of the global ship, Donald Trump who admires strength, and is unpredictable may jump to grab a leadership role in the new direction rather than stand in its way. He has previously been swayed by President Carter's arguments for staying out of international wars and building economic strength instead. Doing so has popular backing in the US. He is a populist.

4.v While backing from Donald Trump for UK principled actions is only a possible outcome, the outcome of not so acting, out of fear of reprisals, is more risky. It would mean we are controlled by external threats not by internal values and decisions. Consider the long term implications.

5.i Historically the West has stood for the rule of law, civilization, freedom, development. Is that how the world sees us now?

5.ii The West - The US, NATO and Israel have global military dominance. Is this all we have left to hold our place in the world? How long will these last without the qualities people admire rather than just fear?

5.ii Israel's justification for its tactic of whole-scale destruction may be that it must rid the world of its opponents to be safe. Nations not in the firing line will comply to avoid being next.

5.iii Has its tactic increased or decreased its opponents, is it working?

5.iv The West may perceive that it's us versus the rest and only through military dominance and threat can we hold onto our advantages eg control of resources. Israel's aggression may be seen as a useful tool in this hegemonic agenda.

5.v Rule by fear ('terror') does not reduce opponents although it may temporarily intimidate them into submission. It does not create flourishing happy societies. The trajectory of Israel's tactic is expansionist. It has reached beyond Israel, greater Israel and beyond the middle east into Europe in the form of settler style violence at international football events and the criminalization of criticism of Israel as anti-semitic in the UK. Is this the future the UK wants?

5.vi Britain has an outstanding historic tradition of freedom. We have pioneered global progress through free thinking and action. Progress such as universal suffrage, parliament, the right to roam, freedom of speech, printing, scientific enquiry and discovery (to name those that spring to mind). The culture of questioning and even disobedience is rather entrenched in the UK compared to many nations.

5.vii Our history, culture and traditions challenge the assumption that we can be cowed into accepting global rule by military domination. Does our government share this tradition or hope to suppress it? Is there a risk of rabble rule and civil breakdown even in Britain which has withstood revolutions for more centuries than most.

5.viii The world faces unimaginably major upheaval from climate change. It is in our overwhelming interest to stop accelerating it for coming centuries. The need for global cooperation is vital and possible, but not while locked into expanding wars.

5 ix The wars are major emitters, wiping out global carbon reductions. They use money that should be used to halt our collective destruction of large parts of the biosphere. The long view shows the imperative to switch focus.

Question 2

What can be learned from... UK Government policies to date?

Points above also addressing this question – 1.iii, 1iv, 2i, 4v on 5i, 5v.

6 Summary:

UK's historic role not addressed. UK looks weak, indecisive, ignored. Population is divided, cowed, leaderless. UK complicity is damaging UK residents profoundly.

Impacts will be long lasting, UK is fomenting anti-Semitism by conflating Israel and Judaism. UK policy of dehumanising, othering is the worst.

6.i

Britain's historic role in creating Israel while not enforcing the qualifying condition to its creation, that it must not be to the detriment of the local population, gives us a special responsibility to initiate and follow through on solutions. We have not yet fulfilled this historic duty but better late than never.

6.ii In common with most of the world, multiple instances of telling Israel it must eg let in humanitarian aid, or negotiate with good will for a ceasefire, have been snubbed and ignored. This makes all of our governments look despised and weak. It does not inspire public confidence in government.

6.iii Lack of clear leadership (which is difficult for most governments) has led the public to feel divided. Many do not like the angry pro Palestinian protests and also abhor the genocidal civilian slaughter, the sadism, cultural and infrastructure destruction and targeting of benign actors, all of which are in plain view. Who can they turn to? UK government should provide leadership in this difficult situation.

6.iv A genocide of extreme cruelty is being perpetrated before our eyes and with our help, and without any official intervention. This is having an unprecedented impact on many UK citizens. We cannot help but realise we could be the victims in time.

6.v As a descendant of Jews who fled the holocaust, were imprisoned by the Nazis, I am overwhelmed by the return of that experience. Along with many, my life is changed. Nothing is more important than waking humanity up from this nightmare. I have a privileged life with children, grand children and great grandchildren around me, all with health, social and financial security, rewarding work. We live in a happy stable future-friendly, nature rich geographic community.

Yet all this privilege tastes like cardboard because of the return of the nightmare, the lack of action by UK government, because of our elected government's complicity. I am not unusual in this respect. The impact on UK citizens is huge and intolerable. It affects every aspect of life (eating, sleeping, emotions, functionality) and our government must bear responsibility for the damage to its citizens. MPs report the relentless volume of communications expressing what I am experiencing.

6.vi An important difference between this event and the last holocaust is that a) the world was much less aware of what was happening then and b) The UK was playing a full and heroic part in going to war with fascism. We were not standing idly by. Despite the difficulties many Jews found sanctuary in Britain. My father was one of them. It won his undying loyalty to the country, and his inventions significantly benefited it economically.

6 vii The association of Israel's actions with Judaism is erroneous and dangerous. The UK is promoting this association by conflating condemnation of Israel's actions with the crime of anti-Semitism, and/or support for terrorism. This may have long term damaging implications for Jews. Judaism is incompatible with Israel's actions. Calling Israel in its current form, a Jewish state, the head of global Judaism is as inappropriate as calling Hitler's Germany Christian, the head of Christianity.

6. viii Many Western nations have accepted medical evacuations of Palestinians, eg USA, European nations. Other nations, including Israel

Mon, 15 Jan, 08:03 (10 days ago)

Dear Vicky,

Thank you for your email.

I recall that you have previously raised the idea of community sponsorship for refugees, and that this is an issue about which you have strong opinions.

While you cite the Ukrainian example, and other schemes, I am minded that the combustible situation in the Middle East is not one from which it is wise to import elements of into the UK, including Pembrokeshire.

I am sorry to say that, as a result, I am unwilling to back any proposals for community sponsorship for refugees from Palestine/Gaza, and there is no mileage in pursuing a further discussion on the matter. I appreciate that this will severely disappoint you.

Kind regards,

Stephen

Rt Hon Stephen Crabb MP

have taken in Palestinian orphans. The UK seems to at the extreme end of othering all Palestinians and not allowing them to be cared for by relatives or friends. The last government's chair of the Conservative Friends of Israel clarified the reasons for refusing all Palestinian sanctuary: He classified them all as 'incendiary elements' ie potential terrorists. Is this why there is no refugee status, not even, with one known exception, is family reunion for orphans allowed.

Question 3

How can the UK... bring about a lasting peace?

7. Summary: *Whatever the geographical boundaries, all states should treat those under their power with humanity and decency. Peace requires rehumanising and seeing mutual benefits in peace. There are previous peace processes to learn from. Britain has unique assets in its people's capacity for active compassion and a track record in diplomacy and peace processes. We could be pivotal even in this intractable conflict.*

7.i I have insufficient knowledge to comment on future boundaries of two states. I can see that if the UK joined other nations in now recognising Palestine as a state, this will help the peace negotiations by giving both Israel and Palestine's needs equal status.

7.ii Whatever the boundaries, those with power should use it to treat others with respect and decency. It is as wrong for one nation to steal another's water or other resources as it is to steal within the nation. Our country does not agree with importing goods made by malpractice eg through slavery. We aspire to ensure decent behavior to all we impact whether within our boundaries or not. Israel should use its power similarly. An apartheid nation is not a democracy.

7.iii [There is plenty of evidence that Gazans and Palestinians are ready to compromise and to espouse peace.](#) My Gazan women friends say 'We wish no harm on any nation. We only want to bring up our educated children in peace'.

7.iv There are plenty of examples too of peoples with past differences living together harmoniously to mutual advantage. One common

feature is the absence of apartheid. All citizens are equal before the law.

7.v This equality does not prevent protected characteristics, a religion can have special status or protection conferred upon it. It can be catered for in school, work, town planning. But crime, eg theft or violence is never treated differently due to a person's religion, unlike in Israel where settlers can steal land and attack its owners with impunity. In Wales, Welsh language is protected. Due to higher buying power the land has been 'occupied' by English speakers. They have brought benefits and some tensions have been caused. Hence the native language being a protected characteristic. This is a peaceful resolution of potential conflict.

7.vi Long bitter disputes and wars have ended in peace, we have peace processes to learn from: The [Good Friday agreement in Northern Ireland](#), [the truth and reconciliation process](#) in South Africa. The process is at work daily throughout the UK and US in [Alcoholics Anonymous 12 steps](#) where alcoholics relive the harm they have done and go around visiting victims to acknowledge and repair. Compensatory instead of retaliatory justice is part of Celtic culture and was codified in Welsh law in the book of Hywel Dda in the 10th century.

7.vii My consultation response does not address the global push towards war. I feel it is orchestrated by shady interests, rather than being inevitable. The counter trend is to spread our shared humanity in the face of huge challenges and destructive interests. While the chances of success are small, there is no alternative. Only shared humanity will deliver a future worth having.

7.viii My relevant background work is in community sponsorship of refugees. I discovered the process and scheme in Canada and helped to pioneer it in the UK, led by Citizens UK. I then spread the scheme through Wales and became embedded in it in one town where we integrated families from Syria. Our success was shared with Europe. The experience benefited the host community as well as the hosted families. It remains a model of integration to mutual advantage. Different cultures have different assets and learning to convey to each other, I discovered. It is an enriching and confirming experience.

7.ix If we had permission to host families from Gaza/Palestine in our communities we could model and demonstrate how to achieve reconciliation and peace on a small scale. While this does not give them back a land of their own, it can build on the unique indomitable compassion of the UK people. I believe it could be a shortcut to long term peace. nb with community sponsorship, the state is not required to provide additional money or housing etc. The community are the sponsors.

7.x To conclude and to illustrate the determination of British people to transform their anguish into healing and compassion, I was asked by the organization Children Not Numbers if I could find homes for small families of Gazans if they were allowed to the UK for the children to heal from injuries. They had found 80 doctors willing to pay for the entire treatment. I was tasked with finding 15 homes. We have a waiting list of thousands for homes in our county. It took me just four days to find them from private providers, with no rent offered.

7.xi Given the above, I do not understand how any government can turn its back on the pain and passion to heal shown by its own people and the opportunity this brings to demonstrate the path to peace.

31st December 2024