

**Written evidence submitted by United Nations Association – Shropshire - to the UK Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee's enquiry 'Israeli-Palestinian conflict' (IPC0108)**

(Authorship described briefly at end)

We thank the FAC Chair, Committee and officers for this invitation to comment. The Committee asks -

***1. What can – and should – the UK do, in cooperation with regional and international partners, to help bring about a ceasefire?***

In order to give effect to Prime Minister Starmer's reported statement to PNA Mahmoud Abbas (7.7.24) that Palestinian statehood as an “undeniable right”, the UK must formally recognise the State of Palestine now, in consensus with 146 other UN Member States (June 2024). This would give equal international status to Palestinians as for Israeli's *de jure* recognition by the UK in 1950.

***2. What can be learned from the record of UK Government policies to date?***

A) If the record commencing from 1917 then objectively, the record has been as successful as catastrophically evident in the present overall condition of the Middle East in general and, Israel and Palestine and Syria and Lebanon and Yemen in particular. From this record the UK should withdraw from any engagement, despite its inescapably inherited historical responsibilities.

B) If the record from July 2024, the present UK Government can be recognised for re-starting aid to UNWRA and its other aid actions to continue to part-only mitigate the human devastations.

Additionally, recognised for its consistency in "*calling for .....*" and "*being fully committed to .....*" - without application of available means of delivery of calls and commitments. Regrettably, this contributes to the ineffectual international 'clamour-in-a-vacuum' and the absence of real world remedy.

Also, for choosing not to respect the 2/3rds+ majority of the global collective in the UN GA by abstaining from UN GA RES 10/23 of May 10th 2024.

For successfully equivocating on UN GA RES 10/22 of 12. Dec. 2023. Barbara Woodhead's explanation of 18 Aug. 2024 " ..... *because the resolution does not provide sufficient clarity to effectively advance our shared aim of a peace premised on a negotiated two state solution*"

We draw attention to the title of the ICJ Case 186 being - '*Legal Consequences arising from the Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem*' This title indicates clearly that the particular focus of this advisory opinion and the following GA Resolution is specifically not about advancing a two state resolution.

This Government, like previous, will have learned that calculated equivocations and prevarications under deference to some international allies, leads to the seemingly endemic *status quo* of violent destructions. This succeeds in tarnishing the UK's international reputation and the UK's history with every passing moment.

***3. How can the UK assure the resilience of efforts to bring about a lasting peace at a time of uncertainty caused by conflicts elsewhere and changes in leadership in the international community?***

First, recognise that '.... efforts to bring about a lasting peace..... are not resilient; the cautious equivocation (i.r.o. Israel/Palestine), on elemental matters of progressing substance pretty much ensures efforts will fail.

The UN records 35 present violent conflicts. The individual state actors and the international community appears unable or unwilling to act quickly or decisively to prevent nascent conflicts while each festers.

A) The UK Government should assert more boldly to all international ears and minds the absolute primacy of the historically developed principles of international rules of law, the referenced 'international norms' and the determinations of the ICJ and ICC. Asserting is the starting place, delivery is what realises what is asserted.

B) To deliver A) by application, when any need arises, of any available (not of 'choosing' but of extant) mechanisms of enforcement of compliance. To will the 'ends' without willing the means continues only to fail the ends.

The international community should not give up nor no longer by-pass. All conflicts end in some form; history records whether or not the peace was just and all the costs of achieving it.

*Contemporary positions.*

The received understandings of recent positions of the two states of Israel and Palestine is that elements within Israel claim Judea and Samaria and Gaza for expanded settlement and likely rights of territorial claim. This expressed *force majeure* contravenes UN GA and SC resolutions with realised impunity, save for the reputation earned amongst the international community of nations and history. 'Right' effectively continues to be subjugated by 'might'.

The Palestinian representative dimensions have consistently pronounced unwillingness to negotiate while settlement expansion in the UN resolved [UN S RES 242 (1967), S RES/2334 (2016) etc.], illegally occupied territories (OPTs) continues unchecked.

A suspicion is available that Israel/Palestine violent conflicts are proxy skirmishes for the 'West vs. the rest' geo-*realpolitik*. This can appear as further extensions of the geopolitical regional and wider still ambitions of major powers. Is the competition worth the destabilisations and destructions ?

(793 words)

*This submission is drafted by John Crowe, Coordinator, UNA – Shropshire and agreed by its Executive to be submitted for and on behalf of UNA – Shropshire.*

*UNA – Shropshire began in 1947 as a branch of United Nations Association – UK and is a unincorporated voluntary organisation of concerned individuals.*

[crowe@Freedomia.net](mailto:crowe@Freedomia.net)

**3<sup>rd</sup> February 2025**