

Frequently asked Questions



Do you support terrorists?

We do not. We are against violence as a method to resolve conflict and that all such actions, **no matter who commits them**, must be exposed and dealt with **equally**.

We do believe in equality, justice, international law and that human rights are universal. We abhor all forms of racism and religious intolerance equally.

We believe that all human lives are of equal value.

Hamas is a proscribed terrorist organisation in the UK, and we do not support, or encourage support for, any such organisation, but this is not the case across the rest of the world. Only nine out of 195 countries in the world designate Hamas as a terror organisation.

In the Middle East, whether we like it or not, it is a political party and it won the last elections held in Gaza.

It has an armed wing as well as a political wing, much as the ANC had in South Africa under racist apartheid.

As Palestine is not allowed to have its own army, navy or air force to defend its citizens, many Palestinians therefore believe it is their right to arm and defend themselves, their homes and their families against attack from occupying foreign military forces or armed Israeli civilians, and indeed under International Humanitarian Law, the Palestinians, like any other

peoples, do have the right to resist unlawful occupation.

The Hamas armed wing has undoubtedly been involved in acts of violence that have killed and maimed Israelis, many who have been, or are, part of the Israeli armed forces, and taken others prisoner, detained against their will and who could be considered as hostages.

But so too has Israel's military forces and armed Israeli 'settlers' been involved in similar, and even worse, acts of violence that have killed and maimed Palestinians, and taken others prisoner, detained against their will and equally could be considered as hostages.

In terms of numbers the Israelis have killed, maimed, and detained many, many more Palestinians since Israeli armed gangs (considered as terrorists by the then UK government) declared an Israeli state in 1948, stole, and continue to steal land, homes and resources from Palestinians.

Evidence - Channel 4 iplayer programme 'The Promise'
BBC iplayer programme 'Louis Theroux The Settlers'.
STV iplayer programme 'Breaking Ranks'.

So, considering all the above; who are the real terrorists and who is supporting them?

What about October 7th 2023?

We acknowledge the horrific acts carried out in and around Gaza on this date, by all involved. It has now been documented by Israeli media itself, as well as international human rights organisations that the claim of beheaded babies and rapes were unfounded. Israeli government Ministers and their military have also admitted to implementing the so called 'Hannibal Directive', meaning that the Israeli armed forces killed their own civilians and soldiers in order to stop them being taken as hostages. Further evidence of that day shows heavy fire power being used that could not have possibly come from the Hamas-led fighters.

We also acknowledge the horrific acts carried out in and around Gaza on October 6th and October 8th, and every other day before and since.

Gaza has been kept under an air, land and sea siege by Israeli armed forces since 2007, surrounded and cut off from essential supplies, not even allowed to fish in their own seas or accept aid into their harbours or airfields.

These extremely tight restrictions mean that the Israeli military controlled what and who got in and out of Gaza, and protests were met with violent military attacks.

Even before October 7th 2023, food, water, medicine and fuel were all scarce in Gaza. 95% of children there were traumatised, malnourished and/or suffered from severe depression. Over 97% of water was unfit for human consumption.

International law allows for any nation to self-defence, but only if this is

proportionate to the original attack, does not involve collective punishment, war crimes or genocide. Israel has been found to be in contravention of all these in their response to the October 7th events.

The Israeli government reported the deaths of 1,140 people stemming from the assault on October 7, including the later deaths of hostages in Gaza. Among them were at least 36 children. There are no clear figures for how many of these were killed by Israel's own military forces or how many of the adults were armed Israeli military reservists, and not purely civilians. It is also estimated that around 8750 Israelis were injured.

Unacceptable as these figures are, they surely must be compared with Palestinian ones.

In the first four months of Israeli attacks on Gaza alone 61,710 Palestinians were killed, including 17,490 children, and a further 14,200 remain missing, presumed dead under rubble. It is also estimated that around 111,600 Palestinians were injured during this period in Gaza.

It is also instructive that in the Israeli military occupied West Bank of Palestine - where Hamas do not exist at all - there were still over 900 Palestinian deaths, including 180 children and at least 7400 injured during the same period, and many more since.

**Sources - *Jewish Voice for Peace
Amnesty International
AlJazeera
Human Rights Watch
Ilan Pappé, Israeli Jewish
Historian***

Are you not being anti-semitic?

Absolutely not. Anti-semiticism is the prejudice or hatred of the followers of Judaism, just because they are the followers of Judaism. It is a form of racism.

We are absolutely against this and all forms of prejudice, hatred or racism.

We are however pro-human rights and therefore anti-apartheid and anti-zionist*; as are many, many Jews in the UK, Israel and around the world.

Criticising and campaigning against the actions of the Israeli state and government forces, and even questioning the very foundation of the modern Jewish

Israeli state itself, are not in themselves anti-semitic, otherwise countless numbers of Jews themselves would be anti-semitic.

Not all Jews are Israeli. Not all Israelis are Jewish. Not all Jews are Zionist. Not all Zionists are Jewish.

Zionism* is a political movement that supports the existence and development of a nation for Jews and where Jews have supremacy over all other religions and peoples. Under zionism, laws do not apply equally to all citizens.

*Sources - Jewish Voice for Peace
Jewish Network for Palestine
B'Tselem, Israel Information
Centre for Human Rights*

What's it got to do with us?

As humans we surely must be concerned with death, destruction, the slaughtering of innocents and military occupation of a land by a foreign power, wherever that takes place in the world. Europe, Ukraine or Palestine.

Human rights and freedoms should be universal, not just for the 'chosen' few.

We believe no one should have their rights denied or be treated differently because of their ethnicity or religion. But this is happening to the Palestinian people at the hands of the Israeli government right now.

We believe there can be a peaceful and just end to the decades of occupation and oppression, one that respects the rights and dignity of Palestinians and Israelis. But until this happens, we have a responsibility to stand up for Palestinian rights.

The UK however has a special responsibility over and above all the aforementioned because the modern

state of Israel was a direct product of British imperialism following the end of the First World War and what became known as the British 'Mandate' for Palestine issued by the League of Nations (forerunner to the United Nations). Having encouraged, supported and largely financed the successful Arab revolt against the Ottoman Empire, who were on the side of the German forces during WW1, Britain was given the role of a supposed caretaker of Palestine, an 'arbiter of peace' between native Palestinians and mostly Jewish immigrants between the wars, but this served as cover for a much more sinister project.

It was British officials who ushered Jews out of Europe - where they were unwanted by racist governments, including Britain's - to implant them in Palestine. There, they were actively nurtured as foot soldiers of a coming 'Jewish State' that was supposed to be dependent on Britain and assist in strengthening its imperial, regional agenda.

In effect, the overstretched British empire hoped, over time, to outsource its colonial role to this new compliant Jewish nationalist state and to help crush any Arab nationalism in the area of the Middle East known as the Levant in response to British and French colonial rule there. The first British Governor of Jerusalem, Sir Ronald Storrs, is on record of stating that the British Empire aimed to build “a loyal little Jewish Ulster in a sea of hostile Arabism”.

Thus the UK put in train a series of events that lead to the murder and slaughter of innocent civilians used as target practice, the killing of thousands of children and babies. Whether as a hobby,

or purposefully as a profession, or whether intentionally or by mistake the IDF is an army responsible for the mass killing of children, women and the elderly and no one in the world can deny this.

Therefore change in the UK can and will affect change in Palestine. The Israeli occupation of Palestine and the horrors that this has brought, can only be maintained as long as the international community supports it. The UK is well placed to have a significant positive impact.

*Sources - Middle East Eye
Gideon Levy
Palestine '36*

What about all the problems we have in this country?

We do not ignore the fact that many people are worried about; the cost of living, the NHS, housing, and feeling like communities are under strain. Those concerns are real and deserve serious attention. But we should be honest about the causes: the UK's problems come mainly from the decisions of our politicians; underfunded services, the fabric of our communities falling apart, a shortage of affordable homes, pressure on our way of life, are the result of the decisions by the people we elect. It does not have to be this way.

The UK is the sixth largest economy in the world and, per head of population, still one of the richest on earth. Unfortunately this wealth, privilege and the opportunities and lifestyle that come from it, is in the hands of fewer and fewer people. The super rich are becoming

richer and more powerful. The rest of us are not. Many of the problems we have in this country could be solved quickly by redistributing this wealth, privileges, opportunities and power.

Caring about conflicts abroad and peace overseas, including in Israel and Palestine, does not stop us improving life here.

If we want to make this country work better for everyone, we should focus on solutions that actually help: building more affordable housing, investing in the NHS, supporting local jobs and businesses, rebuilding civic and community pride, and making sure the social system here is efficient and humane.

Blaming vulnerable people in this country, or turning a blind eye to slaughter and suffering abroad will not lower bills, shorten waiting lists, or improve anyone's life, **but better policies and decisions will.**

www.fvpalestinesolidaritynetwork.org

