

Statement from ORFA on the current situation in Gaza and across Palestine 20/10/23.

updated 18/1/24

The killing of civilians in Israel on 7 October 2023 by Hamas was a war crime and our hearts go out to all affected. However, Israel has no right to commit further war crimes on a larger scale and nothing excuses ignorance or denial of Israel's position as an occupying power. As an organisation with a human rights focus and deep rooted links to the region, we not only extend our sympathies to all innocent people affected, but also give a voice to our partners in Ramallah.

As of 18 January 2024 Israel's Armed Forces have reportedly killed over 24,620 people and wounded 61,830, half of whom are children. UN experts and humanitarian organisations have condemned the collective punishment of the civilian population of Gaza through indiscriminate shelling, the direct targeting of civilian infrastructure, the forced displacement of approximately 1 million people, and total siege. Such actions are war crimes. Providing military, financial and diplomatic support to such operations, could render the UK government complicit. The UK has a particular historic responsibility for the current status of Palestine and we are dismayed by current policies that seem to dismiss this responsibility.

We ask our elected representatives across Oxfordshire and in government to:

- Call for an immediate ceasefire.
- Call for immediate humanitarian access to Gaza.
- Call for action for a sustainable peace and the upholding of human rights.

We also stand with our friends in our twin city Ramallah in demanding an end to this brutal siege.

We call for our elected representatives to condemn the arrests and killing of children and civilians in the municipality of Ramallah and across the West Bank.