



**THE RT. HON. SIR STEPHEN TIMMS MP**

**House of Commons  
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*Labour Member of Parliament for East Ham*

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The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1A 2AA

Our Ref: ST108758

6 November 2023

Dear Rishi,

I wrote to you last month about the Israeli siege of Gaza. I outlined my fears that many innocent civilians living in the area would struggle to access food, water, electricity or healthcare in light of Israel's military incursion into the Gaza strip. I was grateful to receive a reply from the Minister of State at the Foreign Office.

The United Nations Secretary-General has raised concerns that Israel's actions represent a collective punishment of the Palestinian people. Following his comments, the United Nations General Assembly voted overwhelmingly in favour of an "*...immediate, durable and sustainable humanitarian truce*" between Israel and Hamas and demanded unhindered access for aid and essential supplies to the besieged Gaza Strip.

The resolution also demanded sustained access for humanitarian workers, and stressed the need "*...to urgently establish a mechanism to ensure the protection of the Palestinian civilian population*".

The UK abstained, disappointingly, from the vote. Why was this? And will you now press your Israeli counterparts to consider an immediate cessation of hostilities, as proposed by the signatories of Early Day Motion 1685?

Thank you for your help.

Yours sincerely,

**SIR STEPHEN TIMMS MP**

Cc: Constituents