

*Stop the War Coalition* is committed to preventing and ending all wars. We were right when we led millions in opposition to illegal wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and Libya – all failed catastrophes. We oppose and totally condemn Israel's illegal war on Palestinians, noting the difference between the war crimes of a powerful Settler State and the resistance of a colonised people with no state of their own, and no support from the major powers. And we won't succumb to the witch hunt that says criticism of Israel is antisemitic.

This barbaric escalation is unbearable, but for Palestinians it did not begin this month, but with decades of violent Israeli colonisation and denial of nationality. The most prominent human rights organisations - *Amnesty International* and *Human Rights Watch* agree, Israel is an apartheid state.

Sunak and Starmer support Israel's right to self-defence, so is it ok for Israel to subject Palestinians to collective punishment; to drop 1000s of bombs on a besieged Gaza; to deny food, water, fuel, and electricity to a people with no means of escape, to cut off internet and phone lines; to continue to violate international human rights and commit war crimes with impunity; for Sunak and Starmer to not even call for a cease-fire? They have blood on their hands. UN human rights experts call it 'genocide'. We can't bear this suffering and we scream not in our name.

Our government is complicit, providing Israel with military, diplomatic, and political support. We have a special responsibility as, in 1915, in our Empire-building war against the Ottomans, we promised the Arabs a state, including Palestine, if they helped us. Two years later, we broke this pledge, and instead *The Balfour Declaration* guaranteed a home for Jews, paving the way for the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 and the Nakba – the catastrophe - colonisation and ethnic cleansing - over 750,000 Palestinians driven into exile - their villages destroyed.

The US and UK have ignored Israel's illegal siege of Gaza and its decades of killing and displacement of Palestinians, in its violent Colonial expansion. International law states, all peoples faced with illegal occupation have a right to self-defence including through armed resistance.

As Israel begins its new phase of extermination of the Gazan population we shout never **never** in our name.

Our hearts go out to Palestinians crying out for justice. Solidarity is crucial, so join the *Stop the War Coalition*. Wave your Palestinian flags. An injury or injustice to one is an injury or injustice to all - in our thousands, in our millions - we are all Palestinians.