



Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

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Consultative
Status with
United Nations
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Special
Consultative
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with FAO,
ILO and
UNICEF

Dear Foreign Secretary

Israel continues to use inhumane methods to intimidate the Palestinian people and prevent them from rebuilding a normal life

Thank you for the comprehensive letter of 9 April from your team, in response to our letter on World Water Day.

WILPF UK (the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom) notes that you recognise the critical role of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in improving health, gender equality, economic growth, and climate and nature outcomes.

For this reason, we draw your attention to a recent article in *The Guardian* newspaper showing that in Gaza:

"Scarcity of clean water fuels [the] spread of preventable diseases."

It emerges that:

"Israeli forces in Gaza killed a water engineer and two drivers who transported water to displaced families over four days in mid-April."

and that:

"Israeli limits on the shipment of soap, washing powder and other hygiene products into Gaza have also forced prices up, adding to the challenge of keeping clean and avoiding infection in overcrowded shelters and tent encampments."

"Women report infections because they are unable to wash even when they are menstruating and after giving birth, and babies repeatedly get sick because there is no clean water for formula."

During the war:

"Israeli attacks have destroyed most of Gaza's civilian infrastructure, including networks that provided clean water and removed and treated sewage. They have also repeatedly killed Palestinian civilians trying to maintain or restore them."

In spite of the so-called ceasefire in Gaza these reports indicate that Israel has continued to use inhumane methods to intimidate the Palestinian people and prevent them from rebuilding a normal life. It is another example of the way that war and militarism always impact on women, and the work that a patriarchal society expects them to fulfil. If women are not safe, then no-one is safe in Gaza or elsewhere.

WILPF urges you to stop all sales of arms and critical parts for arms to Israel and to condemn the Netanyahu government's continuing inhumane actions against Palestinian people, and women in particular, in Gaza and the West Bank.

Yours in peace

Fiona McOwan, National Secretary, for WILPF UK Executive Committee

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Challenge militarism: invest in peace

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