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Rt Hon David Miliband MP
Foreign Secretary
Foreign & Commonwealth Office
King Charles St
London SW1A 2AH

28th September 2007

Dear David,

In your address to the UN today, we urge you to oppose Israel's sanctions against the people of Gaza. Amnesty International, Israeli organisations and distinguished Israeli writers have all condemned this move, announced on September 19th, to extend these sanctions.

As British Jews and voters, we call on the UK government to stand against this collective punishment, a direct violation of international law.

The Israeli Deputy Prime Minister described the proposal as cutting off 'infrastructural oxygen'. In fact, the threat is to the *real* water and *real* electricity supplies to the entrapped population of Gaza. Euphemisms cannot disguise the genuine danger to health and lives.

Indiscriminate punishment of Palestinian civilians does not protect the people of Sderot but rather, as the Israeli Peace Bloc Gush Shalom says, it unites all Palestinians 'in bitterness and hatred' against Israelis 'who will bear the price eventually'. As you said in your speech to the Labour Party Conference – there may be military victories, but there is no military solution.

The UK Foreign Affairs Select Committee (August 2007) has called the decision not to speak to Hamas 'counterproductive'. This week a petition from Israeli writers, including David Grossman, Amos Oz and A B Yehoshua says: 'In the past Israel has negotiated with its worst enemies, and now the correct course of action is to negotiate with Hamas... to prevent further suffering on both sides.' (Jerusalem Post 23.9.2007)

We urge you to heed these words.

Yours sincerely,

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