

Join the call for removal of Hamas' Political wing from the UK's Proscribed List of Terrorist Bodies

Dear Home Secretary,

We, the undersigned, are calling for the removal of the Hamas political wing from the Proscribed list. Whilst the military wing was proscribed by Blair's Government of 2001, the political wing was only proscribed by your predecessor Priti Patel two years ago, following her secret meetings whilst on holiday in Israel, over which she was forced to resign. It was passed in parliament without a vote.

Section 4 of the Terrorism Act 2000 provides "that the organisation or any person affected by a proscription can submit a signed, written application to the Home Secretary requesting that they consider whether a specified organisation should be removed from the list of proscribed organisations". We are all affected by the Hamas proscription, so our signature on this letter cannot be used against us.

With death and destruction in Gaza, we think now is the time to re-open communications with Hamas' political wing; they are the democratically elected leaders of Palestine. Britain regards the occupation of Palestinian land by Israel as wrong, yet by proscribing Hamas, we exclude Gazan leaders from conversations about resolution. As we created Israel, the responsibility to resolve the occupation falls squarely upon us.

International law guarantees Palestinians the right to resist occupation, including armed resistance- a course which Hamas follows, but few western governments acknowledge. United Nations [resolution 37/43](#) of 1982, "reaffirms the legitimacy of the struggle of peoples for independence, territorial integrity, national unity and liberation from colonial and foreign domination and foreign occupation by all available means, including armed struggle."

The resolution's preamble makes clear that it refers specifically to the rights of Palestinians: "Considering that the denial of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination, sovereignty, independence and return to Palestine and the repeated acts of aggression by Israel against the peoples of the region constitute a serious threat to international peace and security."

Under international law, Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories is illegal, and Palestinians have a right to "armed struggle" against their illegal occupier - thus, ipso facto, Palestinians have a right to defend themselves against Israel - but Israel's right to defend itself against Palestinian resistance is not guaranteed in the same manner.

Hamas' most recent communiqué of 2017 underlines their commitment to abide by the democratic will of a new Palestine – one that includes their oppressors, on the understanding that they cease their Zionist aspirations. They may seek an Islamic state, but they declare they will abide with the democratic preference of a majority- in an electorate that would include those identifying as Jews. No Zionist would be forced to leave a Palestine run by Hamas. Muslim lands have - and still do - welcome Jews, as "people of the book".

Whilst Israel believes it can wipe out Hamas, we believe that translates into wiping out the Gaza people, for they elected Hamas and are closely intertwined with that body. After 75 years of occupation, in 2007 the Palestinians appointed Hamas to lead them; please note that the Palestine Authority rejects Hamas' annual calls for fresh elections.

I declare that because we recently proscribed their political wing, we leave Gazans without a voice. That decision must be reversed.

Yours sincerely,

Sign at www.tiny.cc/hamas

Petition promoted by Pete Gregson, chair of One Democratic Palestine