

Rt Hon David Lammy MP

Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Sent via email

28 May 2025

Dear Foreign Secretary,

Re. Israel's blockade of humanitarian aid in Gaza

On behalf of the British Medical Association, we are writing to you again to express our deep concern for the health and survival of the population in Gaza, including the [critical risk of famine](#) directly caused by the eleven-week Israeli blockade on humanitarian aid and [lack of safe routes for its distribution](#). We welcome your recent [public statement](#) condemning the Israeli blockade on Gaza and the suspension of new trade negotiations. However, without taking further action, we fear Gazans will continue to suffer.

The [obstruction of aid has so far resulted](#) in the deaths of more than 50 children. [One in five people](#) face an imminent risk of starvation and over [17,000 mothers and 70,000 children](#) are at risk of acute malnutrition. Hospitals are facing [critical shortages](#) of essential medicines and consumables, severely impacting our Palestinian and international medical colleagues' ability to provide timely and appropriate care for their patients.

Under International Humanitarian Law (IHL), Israel has a duty to protect civilians and ensure their essential needs are met. Instead of lifting its blockade and facilitating the rapid and unimpeded entry of humanitarian aid and personnel, new proposals have emerged that seek to dismantle the current aid system in Gaza. Israel's plans seek to impose military control over aid distribution and limit aid to hubs in the South. This approach has been categorically rejected by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, [condemning](#) it as a coercive tactic that weaponises aid and further endangers the most vulnerable.

Article I common to the four Geneva Conventions as well as Additional Protocol I demands that states have a duty to respect and to 'ensure respect' for the Conventions 'in all circumstances'. In line with this duty, we urge you to leverage all political and economic influence to hold perpetrators accountable, ensure the protections for healthcare enshrined in IHL are upheld, facilitate the restoration of the phased ceasefire agreement, lift the blockade, and ensure the immediate scale-up of food, water, and medicines delivered across the Gaza Strip.

It is vital the UK's vocal support for international law is backed up by meaningful action.

Chief executive officer: Rachel Podolak

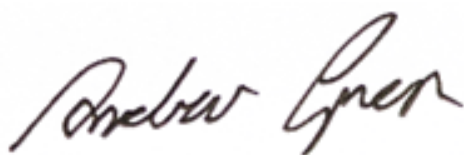
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Yours sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Dr Latifa Patel in black ink.

Dr Latifa Patel
BMA Representative Body Chair

Handwritten signature of Dr Andrew Green in brown ink.

Dr Andrew Green
BMA Medical Ethics Committee Chair

Handwritten signature of Dr Kitty Mohan in black ink.

Dr Kitty Mohan
BMA International Committee Chair

Handwritten signature of Dr Mary McCarthy in black ink.

Dr Mary McCarthy
BMA President