



Letters to the Editor:

The Times  
The Guardian  
The Sunday Times  
The Observer

8<sup>th</sup> August 2014

**The Office of the Deputy Leader  
of Coventry City Council**

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Dear Sirs

### **GAZA AND ISRAEL**

We are writing to you as proud Coventrians, by birth or adoption, who are inspired by our city's legacy of peace and reconciliation and who find ourselves unable to ignore the sufferings of our fellow human beings.

Coventry suffered grievously during the Second World War, primarily but not exclusively as a result of the Blitz which caused the death of so many of the civilian population. For nearly 70 years, the ability of the people of Coventry to reach out, forgive and befriend those who caused such suffering has been an example to the rest of the world of the virtues that lead to peace and reconciliation.

We are deeply concerned about both the suffering of Palestinian people and the danger to life endured by the people of Israel. Personally and collectively we appeal for a peaceful conclusion to this tragic conflict and to renewed commitment to confront and overcome its causes.

We recognise Israel's right to self-determination and the unacceptable threats to life that its people are bearing. However, it cannot be right that so many civilians in Gaza, many of them women and children, who have had no direct involvement with the military offensives, have been killed as a result of recent actions.

In Coventry, as said, a city that has suffered the devastating effect of war during the blitz, we are proud of our reputation as being the city of 'Peace and Reconciliation' and say that another way other than retaliation is needed and that the use of violent reprisal is, ultimately, self-defeating.

We urge the British Government and the United Nations to continue to play an urgent part in bringing about a lasting cease fire. We urge the parties concerned to end their violence and work together to seek a permanent solution to problems which, though they appear intractable, must be resolved for the peace of Jerusalem and the peace of the world.

Together, with the support of the international reconciliation work of Coventry Cathedral and the prayers of those of all Faiths, we pledge ourselves to continue to raise these concerns publicly and to do everything that we can to try to encourage a resolution that will bring an end to self-defeating violence and establish a peaceful existence for everyone concerned, Palestinian and Israeli.

Yours faithfully

The Leader of Coventry City Council, Councillor Ann Lucas OBE  
The Deputy Leader of Coventry City Council, Councillor Phil Townshend

The Leader of the Opposition on Coventry City Council, Councillor John Blundell  
The Deputy Leader of the Opposition on Coventry City Council, Councillor Allan Andrews

The Lord Mayor of Coventry, Councillor Hazel Noonan  
The Deputy Lord Mayor of Coventry, Councillor Michael Hammon

Councillor Joe Clifford, Former Lord Mayor of Coventry (1995)  
Councillor John Mutton, Former Lord Mayor of Coventry (1997)  
Councillor Ken Taylor OBE, Former Lord Mayor of Coventry (2002)  
Councillor Sucha Bains, Former Lord Mayor of Coventry (2003)  
Councillor Ram Lakha OBE, Former Lord Mayor of Coventry (2005)  
Councillor Tim Sawdon, Former Lord Mayor of Coventry (2012)  
Councillor Gary Crookes, Former Lord Mayor of Coventry (2013)

The Lord Bishop of Coventry, the Rt Revd Dr Christopher Cocksworth  
The Chair of the Coventry Muslim Forum, Dr Abdullah Shehu