



**Far North
District Council**



TŪHONOTANGA MINITI ATTACHMENTS MINUTES

Extraordinary Council Meeting

23 May 2024

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**Far North District Council
Motion to Council Meeting
Thursday, 23rd May 2024**

We, members of the Palestine Solidarity Network Aotearoa in the Far North District of Te Tai Tokerau, call for the Far North District Council to pass the following motion.

We also present a petition signed by residents of Te Tai Tokerau in support of a Permanent Ceasefire in Palestine.

MOTION: TO SUPPORT THE MOTION CALLING FOR IMMEDIATE HUMANITARIAN CEASEFIRE IN GAZA, AND TO AMEND THE MOTION REGARDING THE ENDORSEMENT OF A LETTER TO BE SENT TO THE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS - TO INSTEAD BE AMENDED TO CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO SHOW OUR SUPPORT AND CALL FOR AN IMMEDIATE HUMANITARIAN CEASEFIRE .

That the Far North District Council

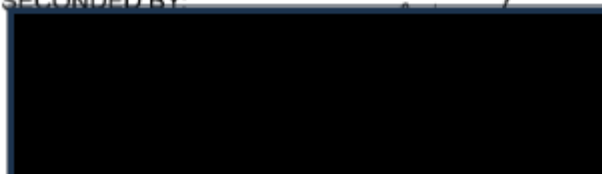
- (a) Calls to all parties in the Israeli war on Gaza for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza,
- (b) Calls on the Government of New Zealand to call for all parties to agree for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza,
- (c) Condemn all acts of violence and terror against civilians, for a release of all hostages on all sides in the Israeli war on Gaza and to give access to vital humanitarian aid immediately.

SIGNED BY:



Debbie Abbas - Ruawai

SECONDED BY:



SUPPORTING MATERIAL

Reasons that these motions should be adopted:

- a. We have a responsibility to Palestinian and Israeli whānau living in this community who are impacted by these events. There are members of our community who have visited, lived and/or worked in the region and hold a vested interest in events there.
- b. A community which upholds international law and human rights is a safer community for all.
- c. The observance of human rights and the condemnation of acts which breach those rights, namely acts of violence and terror against civilians, is an important pillar of our democracy, enshrined in the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act.
- d. Speaking up has moral and political weight.
- e. These events impact on the community wellbeing of residents in Te Tai Tokerau especially when we see on a daily basis through the media, families and young children exposed to extreme acts of violence. Having leaders who call out these atrocities and call for action is important and impacts our collective wellbeing.
- f. Failure to call out acts of violence and terror against civilians is not a neutral position.
- g. International law is persuasive and relevant to your decision making. Aotearoa/New Zealand is a member state and is bound by UN resolutions. There are numerous resolutions that have passed, the most recent being UN Security Council Resolution 2728¹ adopted on the 25th of March 2024 calling for a ceasefire. They have been ignored.
- h. There are a number of local bodies in Aotearoa/New Zealand and internationally who are calling for a ceasefire such as the Whanganui District Council, and the Waiheke Local Board. The more voices that join this call the stronger it becomes.

¹ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2728 (2024). Found at <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n24/080/81/pdf/n2408081.pdf?token=wDvsZMJD9vJoaSq4AG&fe=true>

Current Situation in Palestine

As of 21st May 2024 **35,562** Palestinians have been killed (from <https://www.ochaopt.org/crisis>, "Hostilities in the Gaza Strip and Israel - reported impact Day 227"). This number does not include the 10,000 or more people reported missing or under the rubble as a result of bomb attacks. At least 9,500 of those killed have been women and at least 12,300 have been children.

The number of children killed in Gaza since 7 October 2023 exceeds the entire student population enrolled in primary and secondary schools in the Far North District.

Killed:

- 147 journalists and media workers
- More than 6,500 students
- 301 educational staff
- 262 aid workers including 193 UN staff
- 493 health workers
- 69 on-duty Civil Defence staff

Damaged or destroyed:

- 21 hospitals are out of service
- 155 health facilities are damaged
- 30 ambulances are damaged or out of service
- More than 60% of residential buildings
- More than 73% of school buildings

1.1 million people in Palestine are facing famine due to food insecurity. 31% of children under the age of 2 in Northern Gaza suffer from acute malnutrition. Over 50,000 children are estimated to be acutely malnourished at present.

Catherine Russell, the Executive Director of UNICEF, stated on March 15 2024: "The speed at which this catastrophic child malnutrition crisis in Gaza has unfolded is shocking, especially when desperately needed assistance has been at the ready just a few miles away. We have repeatedly attempted to deliver additional aid and we have repeatedly called for the access challenges we have faced for months to be addressed. Instead, the situation for children is getting worse by each passing day. Our efforts in providing life-saving aid are being hampered by unnecessary restrictions, and those are costing children their lives. We are doing everything we can to avert a worsening of the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, but it is not enough," said Russell. "An immediate [...] ceasefire continues to provide the only chance to save children's lives and end their suffering."²

² Press release from UNICEF, March 15 2024
<https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/acute-malnutrition-has-doubled-one-month-north-gaza-strip-unicef>

The Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territories regarding the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories, dated March 24 2024, said the following of the current situation:

After five months of military operations, Israel has destroyed Gaza. Over 30,000 Palestinians have been killed, including more than 12,300 children. Over 12,000 are presumed dead and 71,0³00 injured, many with life-changing mutilations. Seventy percent of residential areas have been destroyed. Eighty percent of the whole population has been forcibly displaced. Thousands of families have lost loved ones or have been wiped out. Many could not bury and mourn their relatives, forced instead to leave their bodies decomposing in homes, in the street or under the rubble. Thousands have been detained and systematically subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment. The incalculable collective trauma will be experienced for generations to come.

One of the key findings is that Israel's executive and military leadership and soldiers have intentionally distorted *jus in bello* principles, subverting their protective functions, in an attempt to legitimise violence against the Palestinian people.⁴

³ From the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) <https://www.ochaopt.org/content/hostilities-gaza-strip-and-israel-reported-impact-day-222>

⁴ Francesca Albanese, human rights lawyer and UN Special Rapporteur, "Anatomy of a Genocide - Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territory occupied since 1967 to Human Rights Council." <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/anatomy-of-a-genocide-report-of-the-special-rapporteur-on-the-situation-of-human-rights-in-the-palestinian-territory-occupied-since-1967-to-human-rights-council-advance-unedited-version-a-hrc-55/>

Responsibility to Israelis and Palestinians living in Te Tai Tokerau, The Far North District

We have Palestinian and Israeli families living in this community. We need our leaders to speak up when human rights are under attack, when families are under attack and when children are under attack. The absence of clear leadership is in fact more dangerous for families who are personally connected to these events. A political vacuum or lack of clear discourse can lead to misdirected blame or further division by a populace and consequently more harm. A community which upholds international law and human rights is a safer community for all.

It is the experience of our network in Te Tai Tokerau that there is a thread of aggression and negative bias within the community against those who are supportive of the Palestinian struggle. Yet we have many more numbers who are sickened by events in Gaza and The Occupied territories who do speak out, who demonstrate and who compel our local and national representatives to speak on their behalf. Actions have taken place in this rohe and the wider Te Tai Tokerau region every week since November 4th 2023, and prior.

Section 10 of the Local Government Act 2002 states that the purpose of local government is to promote social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future.

Local Government Record on Human Rights

While a call for a ceasefire can be seen as largely symbolic, symbols matter, and calling for this at a local level means that constituents like ourselves and many others in Te Tai Tokerau rohe can feel their political agency matters.

In November 2023, Christchurch City Mayor Philip Simon Mauger became the first mayor to call for a ceasefire. In May 2024, Whanganui District Council became the first Council to pass a motion calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza. Waiheke Island's local board has called for a ceasefire and Environment Canterbury (ECAN Canterbury Regional Council) recently adopted a procurement policy which excludes trading with companies that have relationship with or operate from Israeli organisations occupying Palestinian territory.

In the international context: Providence City, Rhode Island is the first City Council in the US to pass legislation explicitly calling for a ceasefire. Both Seattle and Detroit have followed suit. A total of 70 cities in the United States of America (Reuters) have called for a ceasefire. More than 250 international Human Rights organisations signed an open letter through Amnesty International calling for ceasefire, as well as significant global bodies such as UNICEF, the WHO, and the Catholic Church.

The Sydney suburb of Marrickville called for a ceasefire in Gaza and asked the Government to brand Israel's actions as breaching international law. In Sydney, the Inner West Council resolved support for a ceasefire in Gaza. Finally, the Sydney council of Canterbury-Bankstown has voted to fly the Palestinian flag until a ceasefire is declared in Gaza.

We note that the United Nations Security Council and US President Joe Biden have called for a ceasefire.

On the 20th of May the ICC filed an application to arrest leading members of the Israeli war cabinet including the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, his defence minister, Yoav Gallant and leading members of Hamas .

International Law

There are a number of UN resolutions that are relevant to your decision making.

There is no question that Israel is currently in breach of many international laws. As a starting place, Israel is illegally occupying Palestinian territory. UN resolution 2334 refers to the territory held by Palestine in 1967 and the illegal occupation of that territory by Israel. As an occupier state, Israel has legal obligations to protect Palestinians who live in their territory. Israel is in breach of these obligations by directly targeting and knowingly harming Palestinian civilians. Israel does not have the right to attack citizens whom they have a duty to protect under their military occupation.

International agreements are not directly enforceable on Crown agencies where their provisions have not been incorporated in domestic legislation. However, international agreements are significant even when they are not incorporated into domestic legislation as there is considerable political and moral force on governments to act in accordance with international obligations.

Relevant UN resolutions which you can place weight on in your decision making are set out below:

UN Resolution 2728

UN Security Council Resolution 2728⁵ adopted on the 25th of March 2024 demands an immediate ceasefire for the remaining two weeks of the month of Ramadan and expansion of flow of humanitarian assistance as per international humanitarian law - this legally binding resolution has so far been ignored by Israel.

UN Resolution 2334

The two state solution has been the accepted basis for resolving the Palestinian question for many decades, enshrined in various negotiated accords and UN Security Council resolutions.

In 2017, the Security Council passed resolution 2334 which condemned the obstacles to a negotiated two state solution: incitement and acts of violence and terror against civilians of all sides, and the ongoing settlements programme.

In resolution 2334, Israel was requested to cease all settlement activities in the occupied territory. In support of this, Clause 5 of the resolution calls upon all states to distinguish between the territory of the state of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967 in all dealings with the region.

This Resolution was supported by the New Zealand government.

⁵ United Nations Security Council Resolution 2728 (2024). Found at <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n24/080/81/pdf/n2408081.pdf?token=wDvsZMJJD9vJoaSg4AG&fe=true>

IN SUMMARY**For these reasons,**

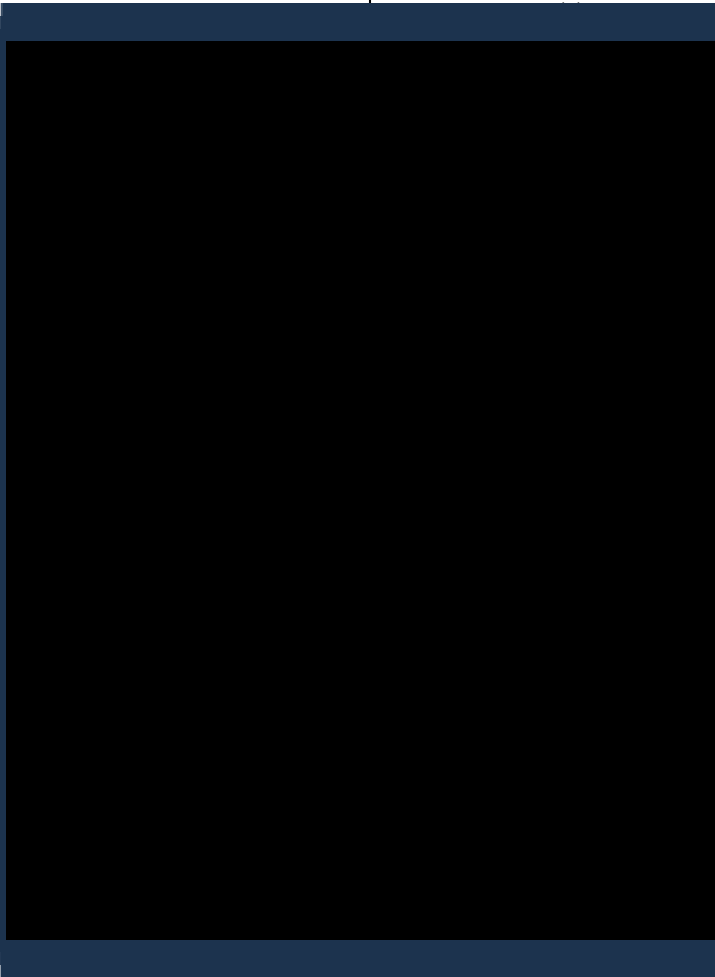
Members of the Palestine Support Network Aotearoa ,in the Far North District of Te Tai Tokerau, and the following undersigned individuals and organisations, call on The Far North District Council to pass the Motion.

“The trouble is that once you see it, you can’t unsee it. And once you’ve seen it, keeping quiet, saying nothing, becomes as political an act as speaking out. There’s no innocence. Either way, you’re accountable.”

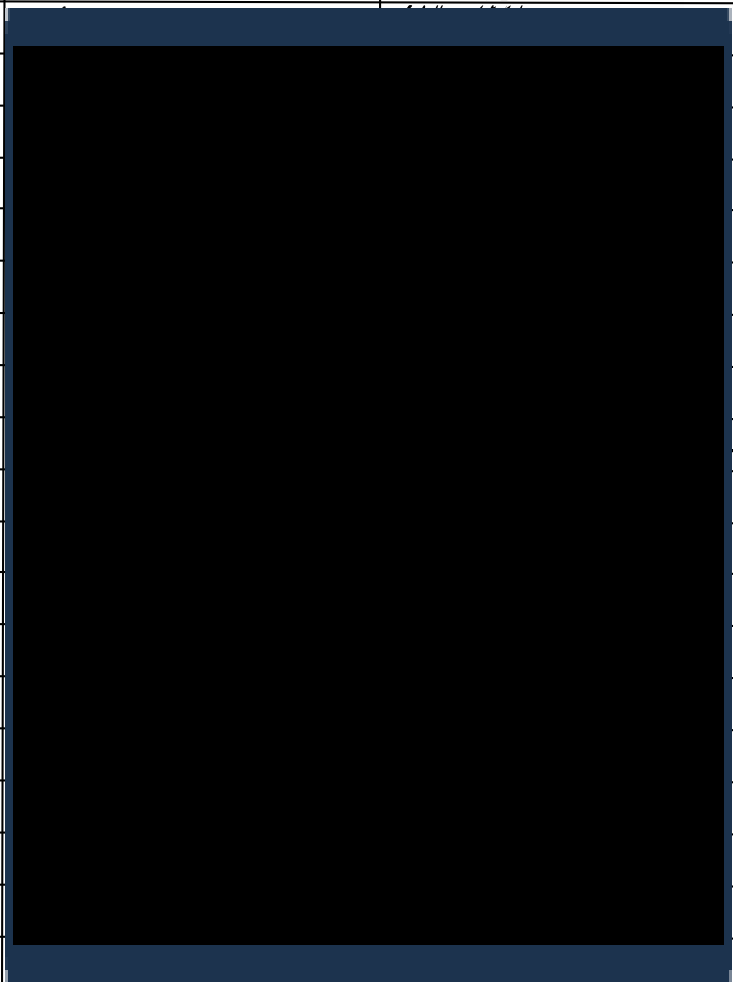

Arundhati Roy

Palestine Support Network Aotearoa (Te Tai Tokerau- Far North District)
Thursday 23rd May, 2024

Signatories – PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name	Address (Signatories do not have to include their addresses)	Signature
Sarah Webb		
John Pizen		
Sandy-Lee Bell		
Jackson Anstod		
Theresa Palmer		
Kiera Elley		
Elizabeth Murray		
Janine McKay		
Milika Nawalowaib McCroory		
Mara Harris		
Catherine Land		
Abraham Land		
ISAAC Land		
Patrick Land		
Culley Palmer		
Sam Land		
Tim Webb		
Tyler Culpeper		
Mapaiia O'Sullivan		

Signatories – PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name	Address (Signatories do not have to include their addresses)	Signature	
Arohanui Allen			
Kohi Woodman			
Tau Woodman			
Rehutu Woodman			
Te Mihinga Woodman			
Claire K White			

To: Moko Tepania
 Far North District Council
 5 Memorial Ave (Head Office)
 Kaikohe 0405

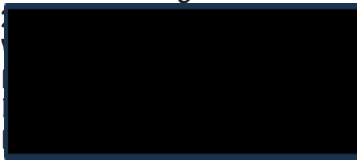
Petition regarding the War in Gaza

Kia ora Mayor Moko Tepania

We the people of the Far North wish to petition the Far North District Council to use your voice to Parliament to call for a permanent ceasefire in Palestine.
 We also ask that you urge Christopher Luxon to lead New Zealand in supporting South Africa in its case to the International Court of Justice calling for an investigation of genocide by Israeli forces in Gaza.

The contact person for this petition is:

Marissa Dowling



To the Far North District Council
 Signatories

Name	Address	Signature
Wiktoria RIAA	[Redacted]	
STEVE McMILLAN		
Jacqui Brooks		
V A Fife		
Kassie Budd		
OWEN ADAMS		
Dallas King		
ANNA WILLIAMS		
Harriet Taniora.		
K Taniora.		

