

Israel must lose

[draft statement by UK-based academics and writers**]**

The massacres in Gaza are the latest phase of a war that Israel has been waging against the people of Palestine for more than sixty years. The goal of this war has never changed. The goal has been to use overwhelming military power to eradicate the Palestinians as a political force, one capable of resisting Israel's ongoing appropriation of their land and resources.

Israel's war against the Palestinians has turned Gaza and the West Bank into a pair of gigantic political prisons. There is nothing symmetrical about this war in terms of principles, tactics or consequences. Israel is responsible for launching and intensifying it, and for ending the most recent lull in hostilities.

It is not enough then to call for another ceasefire, or for additional humanitarian assistance. It is not enough to urge the renewal of dialogue, and to acknowledge the concerns and suffering of both sides. If we believe in the principle of democratic self-determination, if we affirm the right to resist military aggression and colonial occupation, then we are obliged to *take* sides – against Israel, and with the people of Gaza and the West Bank.

We must do what we can to stop Israel from winning its war. Israel must accept that its security depends on justice and peaceful coexistence with its neighbours, and not upon the criminal use of force.

We the undersigned believe that Israel should immediately and unconditionally end its assault on Gaza, end the occupation of the West Bank, and abandon all claims to possess or control territory beyond its 1967 borders. We call on the British government and the British people to take all feasible steps to oblige Israel to comply with these demands, starting with a thorough programme of boycott, divestment and sanctions.

Signatories as of 11pm on 14 January 2009 [to be listed in alphabetical order]:

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