



Ein cyf/Our ref FM/00007/24

R Medwyn Hughes
Gwynedd Council
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17 January 2024

Dear Cllr Hughes,

Thank you for your letter enclosing information about a motion adopted by Gwynedd Council regarding the situation in Gaza and Israel.

Like so many around the world, we drew hope from the recent temporary ceasefire and its extensions, which enabled Israeli hostages to be released and for desperately-needed aid to enter Gaza. It is with profound disappointment and regret the fighting has started again and intensified.

There must be a renewed sense of urgency among the international community to deliver a full and permanent ceasefire, to end the intolerable levels of violence and human suffering as soon as possible. This cessation of violence must be the essential platform for a longer-term and determined political process towards which we can work to establish a two-state solution based on a sovereign Palestinian state and a secure Israel.

There can be no security for anyone in Israel and Palestine without a long-term peace, which is fair to both Israelis and Palestinians.

I met Muslim leaders from across South Wales and attended the public menorah lighting outside the Senedd for the seventh night of Hanukkah. It is clear the events in Gaza and in Israel are having a direct impact on Muslim and Jewish communities in Wales.

The Welsh Government has, in the past, donated to a number of appeals run by the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) on behalf of 15 global humanitarian organisations. We also provide funds to enable the DEC to work more effectively in Wales. The DEC launches an appeal for a disaster or humanitarian crisis when a number of criteria have been reached. One of those criteria is that member agencies can effectively spend money raised and they believe that only a lasting ceasefire would allow them the opportunity to effectively provide the desperately needed aid to the Palestinians living in Gaza.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The Welsh Government will continue to be focused on those responsibilities in our hands, particularly in tackling Islamophobia and antisemitism, to ensure all communities can live together in Wales peacefully and with mutual respect.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Drakeford". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

MARK DRAKEFORD