



**PRESS RELEASE**  
**November 8, 2023**  
**For immediate release**

### **UMO urges for immediate ceasefire in Gaza**

The Union of Muslim Organisations - Walsall (UMO) is urging the UK Government and world leaders to take action and facilitate an immediate ceasefire in Gaza.

The International Community's failure to address the root cause of Israeli – Palestinian conflict over the last 56 years has seen a significant escalation of violence. There have been fatalities on both sides, including over 10,000 Palestinians killed (of which more than 4,100 were children and over 2,500 women) between October 7 and November 7, 2023, as reported by news network Al Jazeera.

There are a further 2,660+ people missing, 1.5 million internally displaced within Gaza due to continued bombing and shelling, and extremely limited access to fuel, healthcare, water and food in the region.

Earlier this week, the United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres spoke at the UN headquarters in New York and underlined the need for humanitarian aid to Gaza and the occupied West Bank, as well as an urgent ceasefire, calling the situation “a crisis of humanity”.

Walsall has had a friendly relationship with the Palestinian village of Kobar in the West Bank since 2014. A number of Palestinian refugees, especially from Gaza, are settled in Walsall.

During a previous conflict in Gaza in 2014, local charities and Home Office Minister Mr James Brokenshire MP (deceased) helped to rescue five members of a Palestinian family, which included three young girls, a young boy, and their mother. This was the family of a British National who was living in Walsall with his two British sons.

Two of the three girls have since married and returned to live in Gaza, back in 2018, as peaceful conditions had returned, and started their own families with two children each. The other sister still lives in Walsall, along with her parents and brother.

The mother has lost 17 members of her family, including her sister and two brothers during the recent genocidal bombings by the Israeli Government. The father also has 62 members of his

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family unaccounted for at present, including 10 grandchildren, three daughters and their husbands.

To support the call for an immediate ceasefire, a number of organisations part of the UMO will be raising the Palestinian flag this Saturday (November 11, 2023), with plans to maintain this for at least a week, or until a ceasefire is achieved.

Nine mosques within the Walsall community have already signed up to the initiative - including Aisha Mosque (Palfrey), Al-Aqsa Mosque (North Walsall), Central Mosque Committee and Community Centre (Chuckery), Masjid Al Farouq (Palfrey), Masjid-e-Usman R.A (Caldmore), Masjid Al Madina (Walsall), Masjid-e-Umar (Darlaston), Darus Salam Masjid (Darlaston), and Walsall Central Mosque (Birchills) - with more expected to follow suit.

Following the ongoing devastation in the Middle East, there has been a massive outpouring of support for the Palestinian people across the country - and the world at large - with numerous peaceful protests and significant social media discourse to raise awareness of their plight and the need for a swift and non-violent resolution.

The UMO's plan to fly the Palestinian flag over the coming days aims to be yet another show of solidarity with the affected citizens of Gaza, alongside movements and actions by communities across the globe, irrespective of race, colour, religion, background or orientation.

Mohammed Arif, Chairman of UMO said: "I welcome this initiative from Walsall mosques to stand with humanity. We condemn all forms of terrorism. The war on Gaza has touched Walsall with two local Palestinian families losing members of their family due to genocidal actions by the Israeli Government. The flying of the flag shows that Walsall is in solidarity with the people of Palestine. We also want to emphasise that our stand is based on justice and equality and is not an attack on any community or religion."

**ENDS**

### **Notes to editors:**

### **References**

- Statistics are from [Al Jazeera's latest report, dated November 7, 2023](#)
- [United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres speaks](#) at UN headquarters in New York on November 6, 2023

### **About UMO**

The Union of Muslim Organisations – Walsall (UMO) is the representative umbrella organisation for the Muslim community of Walsall. The organisation represents all the mosques and madrassas within Walsall, as well as many other local organisations that provide services to the Muslim inhabitants of the borough of Walsall.

The UMO comprises 17 mosques and other organisations across the Walsall borough, including:

- Abu Bakr Masjid (Palfrey)

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- Aisha Mosque (Palfrey)
- Al-Aqsa Mosque (North Walsall)
- Central Mosque Committee and Community Centre (Chuckery)
- Dar-us-Sunnah Madani Trust (Caldmore)
- Darus Salam Masjid (Darlaston)
- Jalalia Sunni Jami Masjid & Islamic Education Centre (Caldmore)
- Masjid Al Farouq (Palfrey)
- Masjid-e-Usman R.A (Caldmore)
- Masjid-e-Umar (Darlaston)
- Masjid Hamza (Butts)
- Masjid Al Madina (Walsall)
- Minhaj-ul-Quran (Pleck)
- Shah Jalal Mosque (Caldmore)
- Walsall Central Mosque (Birchills)
- Zia-E-Madina Mosque (Darlaston)
- Afghan Community & Welfare Centre (Walsall)
- Bilal Academy (Walsall)
- Midland International Aid Trust (Walsall)
- Somali Community Centre (Walsall)

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