

Open letter by German artists pledging to stop the war in Gaza

1 August 2014

To

Members of the German parliament
German members of the European Parliament
The German government

At the time of writing, 1,437 Palestinians have been killed and more than 8,265 have been seriously injured, since the Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip commenced on 8 July 2014. Christopher Gunness, spokesman for UNRWA, has condemned the attacks on Palestinian civilians by the Israeli army as a violation of international law.

We are witnessing severe war crimes conducted by an army which claims to have precise and modern weapons yet conducts targeted bombings of hospitals, ambulances, children's playgrounds and even UN building designated as civilian shelters.

Since the beginning of the 2006 embargo, Gaza's 1.8 million inhabitants have been living in the world's largest open-air prison. They have been largely dependent on UN and aid agencies as well as on Israel's decision to permit the entry of living essentials. This is inhumane and intolerable.

Gaza's trapped civilians remain defenseless in the face of a blockade through walls and border fortifications that deprive them of vital infrastructure. Especially affected are medical care services, which have largely collapsed, while thousands with serious injuries remain in desperate need of medical attention. We cannot accept that Palestinians' basic rights and their protection from massive armed attacks are less important than the protection of the Israeli civilian population.

While the Israeli army, which repeatedly attacks Gaza's population, bears primary responsibility for the death and endless misery of thousands of people, it is aided by German weapons, and abetted by a framework of close German-Israeli military, political and cultural cooperation.

As artists and cultural workers in Germany, we can no longer remain silent. We demand that German officials and members of parliament urgently stand up for the basic rights and protection of the Palestinians.

We ask that you fulfill your responsibility and utilize the considerable influence you wield, through the close cooperation with Israel, to appeal to Israeli decision-makers for:

- an immediate and complete withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza and the definitive cessation of all attacks on the civilian population from the air or ground
- the lifting of the siege on the Gaza Strip
- the opening of Gaza's border and crossings for goods, supplies and people

This open letter is signed by artists and cultural workers in Germany:

Writers, filmmakers, musicians, theater makers, dancers, actors, journalists and academics.