

# The starving of the Gaza inhabitants is a crime and a folly

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**Mistreating a million and a half people will make them the most bitter of enemies.**

**Instead of a cruel policy of naked force, we should negotiate with all Palestinians - including Hamas**

“With our own hands we are uniting a million and half people against us, in bitterness and hatred” says Gush Shalom (Israeli Peace Bloc). “The inhabitants of the Gaza Strip are completely dependent on Israel for their most basic livelihood. This complete dependence was created, consciously and deliberately, by all governments of Israel since 1967. The state of Israel cannot now just shrug off its responsibility for the fate of the inhabitants of Gaza.

The people of the Gaza Strip have already been living for a long time in terrible squalor, on the very edge of starvation. Now we push them even much deeper into hell. The state of Israel is today roughly trampling International Law, in indiscriminate collective punishments of a whole civilian population. We, too, will eventually pay the price.

This policy of force and oppression is also emptying of content the negotiations supposedly taking place with Abu Mazen and the leadership he heads, presenting him and his followers as accomplices in the terrible suffering caused to their people. There can be no peace without talking to and negotiating with the entire Palestinian people, with all its parts including the Hamas leadership, which has explicitly expressed its willingness to discuss a cease-fire and a mutual end to attacks on both sides of the Gaza border. This is the alternative to the policy of trampling force whose main proponent is Defence Minister Barak, formally leader of the Labour Party - effectively leader of the Extreme Right in Israel”.

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