

ISRAEL–HAMAS CONFLICT

Statement

HON LORNA HARPER (East Metropolitan) [5.38 pm]: I rise tonight in solidarity with my sister Hon Klara Andric after the powerful, personal and very emotional speech she gave. I would like to read from another powerful, personal and emotional speech given by Senator Fatima Payman in the Senate a few weeks ago. It states —

The killing of innocent civilians in Israel should be condemned and we condemn it. The killing of innocent civilians in Palestine should also be condemned and we must condemn it.

The international community loudly and proudly condemned Russia's occupation of Ukraine when it started attacking Ukraine in 2014 yet today the world watches as the state of Israel deprives the entire population— men, women and children—of the basic necessities of life: food, water, electricity, gas and medicines. We must condemn it.

Israeli missiles strike residential dwellings, civilians, multistorey apartments, health facilities as well as places of worship, indiscriminately killing men, women and children. We must condemn it. Human Rights Watch confirms that Israel is using white phosphorous in Gaza. That violates the international humanitarian law prohibition. We must condemn it.

The price tag of Israel's right to defend itself cannot be the destruction of Palestine. Israel's right to defend its civilians cannot equate to the annihilation of Palestinian civilians.

Alongside many world leaders and experts, Fatima then went on to call for an immediate ceasefire to come into effect. She continued to state —

Food, water, medicine and humanitarian aid need to be allowed to get through and reach the victims. Mediation and talks need to start, as obviously violence has not solved anything for the past 75 years, and a just and long-lasting solution needs to be sorted out.

Fatima spoke about that a few weeks ago. As Hon Klara Andric has said, the situation has got worse, not better. There have now been over 10 000 Palestinians killed with 40 per cent being children. We now have the United Nations Human Rights Chief saying that the UN has suffered the highest loss of life in its history in one operation. The death toll of humanitarian workers from a single military operation has been the highest in the organisation's history. Not only are the men, women and children of Palestine suffering and being decimated, but the people who are meant to help them are also being attacked and decimated. We have all seen hospitals and refugee camps on the news.

Again, I stand with my sister Hon Klara Andric. Violence on both sides should be condemned. We do not support it at all. What we do support is a pause. Let us sit and take a breath and hopefully get some more humanitarian aid to the people of Palestine. Let us sit and have some people have a discussion so that we can, hopefully, end this horrible conflict.

Another thing that I would quickly like to say is that I am so proud to be standing here with so many women of character, strength, emotion and power. Hon Ayor Makur Chuot talked about her sister and what is happening and how she has come from a refugee camp to where she and her sister are today. That is a testament to her, as well as Hon Klara Andric, coming from her background. As women, we need to keep standing up and saying what we believe in. We believe that we should talk more and fight less. Thank you.