



Sir Keir Starmer KCB KC MP  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1A 2AA

OPEN LETTER

19<sup>th</sup> May 2025

Dear Prime Minister

Firefly International is a small, Edinburgh-based charity working for war-affected children. We were established 30 years ago, in the closing stages of the civil war in Bosnia, with a project to bring Croat, Serb and Muslim children together in an arts-based playgroup. Today we are still active in Bosnia, where our peace-building work is still needed and are also now working with Syrian and Palestinian children.

Until October 2023 Firefly was a partner in a child mental health centre in Gaza. Trained child psychotherapists (trained in the UK) helped children affected by the recurrent Israeli missile attacks, to process their trauma. The centre was bombed shortly after the Israeli retaliation began, following the 7<sup>th</sup> October 2023 massacre carried out by Hamas in southern Israel. The small staff team in Gaza scattered. We remain in almost daily contact with them, mostly by WhatsApp. This gives us up-to-the-minute information of life on the ground in Gaza.

The situation there is horrific. It is estimated that a child is killed every 45 minutes in Gaza, or 30 children a day. With every day now passing, these appalling statistics on the violent deaths of children will be compounded by their more drawn-out, but equally horrific, deaths by starvation. Nearly 71,000 children under the age of 5 are suffering from acute malnutrition.

We were pleased to read Ambassador Barbara Woodward's strong statements to the UN Security Council on 13 May but what is the UK Government's next move? As one of the permanent five and as one of the world leaders demonstrably able to build a good working relationship with President Trump, we implore you to act beyond making statements and to act very fast. With each passing day, scores more children die.

Please use your position of almost unparalleled power, outside the US, to bring this atrocity against humanity to an end.

Yours sincerely,

Diana McMicking  
Chair, Firefly International

**Firefly in Bosnia**  
**Firefly for Syrians**  
**Firefly in Gaza**

**TRUSTEES:**

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