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Great Britain: Standing Together leaders urge UK politicians to support the fight for peace and equality, and recognise the State of Palestine

Thursday 6 February 2025, by [DAOOD Rula](#), [GREEN Alon-Lee](#) (Date first published: 31 January 2025).

On 27 January, Standing Together's National Co-Directors Alon-Lee Green and Rula Daood addressed the UK Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee inquiry into the Israel-Palestine conflict.

We'll be sharing some video clips of their comments soon. In the meantime, you can read a full transcript of the session [here](#), and watch it in its entirety via the [link below](#).

The session included contributions from Bassam Aramin and Robi Damelin from the Parents' Circle, John Lyndon from the Alliance for Middle East Peace (Allmep), and Shahira Shalaby and Amnon Be'eri Sulitzeanu from the Abraham Initiative.

Some excerpts from Alon-Lee and Rula's comments are reproduced below.

RulaDaood: We are a grassroots movement that works within our society—within Israel. Since 7 October, the only thing we have been doing as a Jewish-Palestinian grassroots movement is building political power in our society for our demands. The first demand was for a ceasefire, the second demand was for an agreement to stop the war, and the third and most urgent demand is to have a real future for people living in Israel and Palestine.

Both of us have lived through too many wars, on both sides of the border, to put it like that. Too many people have lost their lives. The leaderships in Israel and in the West Bank and Gaza have not been able to bring us a solution. This war between Israel and Hamas was not the first one. We really hope it will be the last one, but as long as our leadership still sits around the same table and does not speak about real solutions, nothing will change.

The real solution is to have a real Israeli-Palestinian peace: a peace that will give the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza the ability to have their own independence, not to have military occupation in their lands; rebuild the lives of the people in Gaza, in the south of Israel and in Israel; and continue from there to an understanding that, for both of us to have real security, we must have peace. For people in Israel to feel safe, Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank need their own freedom and independence; for Palestinians to have their own freedom and independence, Israelis must have their own security. That will come only with the achievement of real diplomatic agreements and real Israeli-Palestinian peace.

The very basic fact is that none of us on this Zoom talk is going to pack up and leave the place that we call home; it is home for all four of us. We need to understand what path will lead to that change. As a grassroots movement in Israel, we have been going out in the streets since 7 October, demonstrating each and every week, and demanding a ceasefire and a yes to Israeli-Palestinian peace.

It is not just that; we are building our political power. We are building it by organising people from different communities within Israeli society. We have been building a new and different leadership of younger people who will be able to demand freedom, security and peace for all of us. We believe that the most essential work that needs to be done is within grassroots movements, organising people within our society. Right now, our politicians are not speaking of different solutions. They see victory as eliminating one side.

The Israeli Government—the Bibi Netanyahu Government—has sat down with Hamas, come out with a deal and are celebrating it, and calling victory on both sides. At the same time, tens of thousands of people have lost their lives or homes, and there is total destruction. There is no victory in images of people returning to destroyed homes, nor in images of hostages coming back after 15 months underground. This is not the victory that we want. The victory we want speaks about a life of safety for both of us. It will happen only by achieving real Israeli-Palestinian peace.

This is what we do at the grassroots level. That is important work because we understand that the most essential thing is that the people in this land fight for these principles. If we are not convinced as people that the only way we will have a different future is by stopping these endless wars and reaching a real Israeli-Palestinian peace, nobody is going to come from outside and help us. Our main work, for the last 15 months, has been building that political power within our society.

Alon-Lee Green: Just a brief example of the work we did in the last 15 months: it was a very long campaign that we led around the question of aid to Gaza. This is also a question of the West Bank. Why? Because organised Israeli settlers from the West Bank have been trying to block, as you are well aware, the aid that made its way either from the Jordan border or from Palestinian cities in the West Bank. They tried to block it inside the West Bank and at checkpoints. After it escalated, groups of extremist settlers started to set the aid trucks on fire to send Palestinian truck drivers to hospital. Even Israeli soldiers were sent to the hospital.

We built and initiated the humanitarian guard that within six weeks started to recruit 1,000 members from our movement to stand in daily shifts between the aid trucks and the settlers, facing the settlers, and blocking them from attacking the aid trucks. At the beginning it was extremely violent, including knives and attempts to stab. The police did not show up. It was an order from the Minister of Police, Ben-Gvir, not to interfere and not to stop or arrest any of the settlers.

We suffered from a lot of violence, but afterwards, because Israeli citizens were clashing with other Israeli citizens—us and the settlers—the police started to show up and separate us and make arrests. We paid with some unpleasantness and turbulence, but eventually the police showed up in the mornings, not allowing us to go on the road, but also not allowing the settlers to go on the road, and we won. Since 27 May, all the aid trucks have been able to go to Gaza.

Another part of the campaign was to call on Israeli citizens to insist on our humanity and to recruit and donate aid ourselves—mainly Palestinian citizens. People from the West Bank donated so much aid to Gaza in hundreds of trucks. That was an act of solidarity, but also an act of self-interest. It is a question of what kind of society we remain in the face of trauma, fear and grief.

[...] The very simple option is this: only peace will bring us security. We will be safe only if we do

not control millions of people—a different people that is not free, not independent and not equal to our rights. This is not something new. It is a very basic idea. It has existed for so many decades, but it has been forgotten in our political discussion and our public discussion. That is the beginning of the political theory.

The second level is to organise and to build power, because it seems as if people do want to have a better life. But even when we see masses of people going out to the streets in Israel, they shout “Democracy” sometimes about the Supreme Court in Israel, but it is easy to forget that there cannot be democratic freedoms and democratic life as long as we have occupation and as long as the occupation moves from the West Bank and trickles down into our society. Rula here does not live in the West Bank; Rula, you live as a Palestinian citizen of Israel, and maybe you can speak about it. But we see oppression moving deeply into our society as well.

RulaDaood: The theory of change that speaks about “What do we need in order to be secure?” is very simple. It speaks about peace. We do need peace in order to live in security. This is the work of the people living here, the people within Israel and Palestine: to make that change. But there is one thing that is really missing, and that is some kind of pressure that can be put on the Israeli Government. We have not really seen that in the past 15 months.

We came to England, we went to Germany, we went to the US and we sat with many officials in different Governments. Many told us that after 7 October, Israel has the right to defend itself. We answered, “What about Palestinians? Do they also have the right to defend themselves? How can we come to a place where people are really equal if we only stand on the side of one Government?”

Then comes the real question of how you can really be a good friend of Israel or the people who are living in Israel, or even the Government of Israel. Does it mean giving this Government a blank cheque to do whatever it seeks to do? All we have seen for 15 months is real destruction.

You have a huge power to impact and affect the lives of people living in Israel-Palestine. What we demand from you, and what we really need from you, is not just to be there when a ceasefire is signed. It is not enough for us to have just a ceasefire; we want an end to these wars. We believe that in order to have a real peace, you, as officials and Governments, should be helping us by giving more place to an independent Palestinian state.

There could be a committee with a huge and very strong voice that says that the security of Israel will be there 100% only when there is an independent Palestinian state. Then, pressure can be put on the Israeli Government from different Governments, from Europe and from the US, and it can start affecting the decisions that are made here.

We need to understand that the real solution is to step on from just a ceasefire, from phase 1, 2 or 3 of this war, and into ending all of these wars. This will only happen by a process that will bring two independent states.

Israel is a state. It is independent, it has its own army, it has its own economy, it is very strong and it has its own society. It is about time for Palestinian people to have their own freedom and independence.

We need that kind of pressure from you on our Government. It would be very helpful to our theory of change, because it would not just be us—the people living here—demanding it, but other Governments all over the world, especially Europe and the US, putting pressure on that Government. This can have an effect and make a change for us in Israel-Palestine.

Alon-Lee Green

Rula Daood



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P.S.

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