



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Jean Urquhart MSP  
Highland & Islands Region

Minister of Defence Moshe Ya'alon  
Ministry of Defence  
37 Kaplan Street  
Hakiryia  
Tel Aviv 61909  
Israel

Tuesday 10th December 2013

Dear Minister,

Like many around the world, I am appalled by the scenes of excessive and unnecessary force used by the Israeli military against demonstrators in Nabi Saleh.

As you will well know, since 2009 people of Nabi Saleh have protested weekly against the seizure of their agricultural land and water supplies for use by the illegal occupation settlement of Halamish. The armed forces of Israel have responded to these demonstrations by firing tear gas canisters, stun grenades, rubber-covered steel bullets and live ammunition.

Hundreds of civilians have been injured, including women and children, and two men - Mustafa Tamimi and Rushdi Tamimi - have been killed by the armed forces during these attacks.

Mustafa Tamimi died after being shot in the face with a tear gas canister at near-point-blank range on December 9, 2011. Your government has repeatedly confirmed that canisters are not to be fired directly at targets, but the practice continues, facilitated in part by whitewash investigations such as this one, which concluded only that the servicemember involved, firing at a low angle, "could not have seen" Mr Tamimi.

Rushdi Tamimi was killed by Israeli military personnel on November 19, 2012. 80 rounds of live ammunition were fired at demonstrators after the unit involved ran out of tear gas, one hitting Mr Tamimi in the back. As the military investigation concluded that there was no justification for the use of live ammunition, I hope and expect that there will be serious criminal charges forthcoming.

On this United Nations Human Rights Day, as the life of Nelson Mandela is commemorated in Soweto and around the world, I was saddened to receive reports that the military assault on peaceful protest extended even to firing upon demonstrations in his memory.

I request that you immediately and permanently stop the use of excessive force against the people of Nabi Saleh, and that you hold to account the personnel responsible for the killings of Mustafa Tamimi and Rushdi Tamimi.

Yours faithfully,

Jean Urquhart  
Member of the Scottish Parliament

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