

DR. CAROLINE LUCAS

Green Party
for the South East of England

BBC Trust Unit,
Room 211,
35 Marylebone High Street,
London W1U 4AA.

January 27th 2009

Dear Trustees,

I am writing to register my strong opposition to the BBC's decision not to air the Disaster Emergency Committee's appeal for funds to help tackle the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

In refusing to broadcast this appeal from 13 of the world's most respected charities the BBC has fallen into the very trap it wished to avoid - partiality. Whilst the occupation of Palestine is clearly a political issue, it also has humanitarian consequences which are well recognised and documented. Yet the BBC's decision suggests it does not recognise that distinction - clear evidence of its own institutional bias.

It is not for the BBC to tell professional aid agencies how to do their jobs. Everyone knows the situation in Gaza is dangerous and that the cease-fire is extremely fragile. But aid lorries are getting through. The people of Gaza are desperate for medical supplies, and food, and the DEC works with United Nations' organisations to ensure that this sort of aid reaches the right place. These DEC appeals are worth millions of pounds to the charities and it is absolutely disgraceful that the BBC should refuse to broadcast the appeal.

I would also like to urge the BBC Trust to carry out an urgent investigation into coverage of the recent attacks on Gaza by the Israeli authorities. I believe that far from acting impartially, the BBC is guilty of perpetuating a subjective view of events. For example, broadcasters referring constantly to Hamas as a militant group rather than the democratically elected government, and consistently citing rocket attacks from Gaza as the reason for the conflict without providing any context about Israeli settlements, the siege of Gaza and the occupation.

I hope these matters will be given your immediate attention and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Caroline Lucas - Green Party MEP for South East England.