

Dear Sir,

Israel's continuing assault on Gaza is not only 'disproportionate,' as the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights is reported as saying yesterday (Israel considers ground attack, Guardian 29.12.08! ). It is also deeply counter-productive.

The population of Gaza is already suffering the devastating consequences of the Israeli blockade, which has accelerated their decline into even greater hunger and poverty. Casualties among the civilian population only serve to make people more angry, and sow the seeds for further conflict

Shamefully, however, EU leaders are complicit in this crisis. By choosing to upgrade EU relations with Israel just a few weeks ago (against the advice of the majority in the European Parliament), they have squandered a key opportunity to put real pressure on the Israeli authorities to lift the blockade.

Violence can never be justified or condoned on either side. But the longer the deadly blockade and occupation continue, the further away the conditions for peace will get.

Yours sincerely,

Caroline Lucas MEP