**Open letter from York St John University Staff and Students Calling for a Ceasefire**

**Dear Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary,**

We the undersigned call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and an end to the bombardment that has killed more than 11,000 Palestinians, including more than 4,000 children.

António Guterres, the United Nations General secretary, has referred to Gaza as a ‘graveyard for children’, and the World Health Organisation calls the suffering of the Palestinian people ‘hard to fathom’.

The total siege and military bombardment of Gaza has caused a humanitarian catastrophe that cannot be abated by ‘humanitarian pauses’. Temporary pauses are not humanitarian.

We should not have to remind you that, under international humanitarian law, it is illegal to target civilians, illegal to deny civilians food and water, illegal to target hospitals and schools, and illegal to encourage such actions. You have a duty to ensure respect for international law and the UK Government’s reluctance to call for a ceasefire is shocking.

Only a ceasefire will stop the killing and allow for the scale of humanitarian aid required to reach wounded, frightened and starving men, women and children in Gaza.

We urge you to back a permanent ceasefire and to engage in meaningful diplomatic relations to facilitate the release of hostages, end the illegal occupation of Palestine, and achieve lasting peace and freedom for Israeli and Palestinian people

Signed,