

Raising the UN Flag

Statement from Samantha Walker

On behalf of the Palestinian community in BANES I would like to thank you all for unanimously voting for the motion calling for a ceasefire in Gaza.

It is an important step towards acknowledging the harm inflicted on our community and the people in Palestine alike.

We hope this step at the local level, encourages other councils to adopt similar motions that could eventually lead to firmly practicing pressure on Israel.

We also think that raising the UN flag would make the Council's efforts more visible, and would remind our local community of the values that the Council hold; democracy, human rights, and international peace.

As the raising of the flag was adopted as part of this specific motion, that focuses mostly on the situation in Palestine, we strongly believe that it is vital that the flag is raised around days that are relevant to peace, the situation in Palestine, and human rights being violated in conflict.

As this action will help in supporting the local community's effort to push for a ceasefire, we think that it is key that the flag is raised as a matter of urgency, i.e. as soon as possible.

After lengthy consultation, we propose the following UN days:

September 21st (to 28th): **International Day of Peace**

November 20th (to 27th): **United World Children's Day** which commemorates the Rights of the Child. Mothers, fathers, teachers, nurses, doctors, local government leaders and civil society activists, religious and community leaders, professionals as well as young people and children themselves can play an important part in making World Children's Day relevant for their societies and communities and could be a local focus for inclusive community building.

November 29th (to December 5th): **International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People**. As we are very restricted and cannot even demand solidarity with the Palestinians through raising a Palestinian flag, the way

council did in the case of Ukraine/Russia, we must affirm the importance of raising the flag around days related directly to the Palestinian cause.

December 9th (to 16th): **International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime.**

The four days are scheduled before the end of the calendar year, building a momentum for more community action, and strengthening the spirit of the motion, and make it clear that the Council is keen to reach a permanent ceasefire.

Having the last three consecutively means that we will be able to solve a practical issue of putting the flag up and then down for 4 times.

The flag in this case could be raised once from November 20th to December 16.

We appreciate your good intentions, but for the council to uphold peace and not justice rings very hollow.

Thank you.