

## **Stop the Spread of War**

Conference notes with concern that during 2008 and already in 2009 military conflicts, in addition to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, have led to thousands of civilian deaths including large numbers of children. In countries across Africa and the Middle East the civilian population does not enjoy the peace with security to which everyone should have a right.

Conference endorses the view of Education International that the targeting of educational infrastructure, whether in Gaza or elsewhere can never be acceptable. Conference asserts that schools and colleges should be safe havens for civilians and in particular for children during military conflict.

Conference is also concerned at the wholly unjustifiable continuation of an economic blockade against Cuba, and the vilification and economic destabilization of other Central and South American states where the people have elected governments that are challenging neo-liberalism.

Conference is therefore concerned that, in a period of global economic recession, the competitive drive at the heart of capitalism could spill over into more rather than fewer military conflicts including civil wars, like those inside Darfur, Somalia, Zimbabwe and Kenya during 2008, with grave consequences for the teachers, children and communities of many parts of the world.

Conference endorses the motion passed by the Executive on the crisis in Gaza, on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2009. Conference urges all associations and divisions to hold collections for MAP (Medical Aid for Palestinians) and the Tom Hurndall Education Fund, as agreed by the Executive.

Conference condemns the Israeli attacks on the people of Gaza in January 2009, which killed over one thousand people, including three hundred children.

Conference notes that the people of Gaza have lived for the past two years under an Israeli blockade that has prevented them from receiving vital food, electricity and medical supplies. Under the recent invasion, Save the Children, reported a "severe shortage of food" and the UN warned of a humanitarian crisis. Conference, therefore, condemns the decision of both Sky and the BBC not to broadcast the DEC aid appeal for Gaza.

Conference further notes that many of the weapons used in the attacks on Gaza have been sold to the Israeli government from the UK; over £18.8 million worth of British arms were sold to Israel in 2008 alone.

Conference therefore instructs the Executive to:

1. Work closely with partners such as the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and Stop the War Coalition on questions of educational materials, military recruitment, peace protests and campaigns aimed at getting UK troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan and ending the Israeli denial of Palestinian rights.

2. Call on the British Government to end the arms trade between Britain and Israel and to call for an end to the EU-Israel Agreement until the occupation is ended.
3. Call on the British Government to ban all imports from illegal Israeli settlements and encourage our members to boycott goods, especially agricultural produce, produced in the illegal Israeli settlements in the Occupied Territories.
4. Condemn the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2009 statement by the Histadrut defending the Israeli bombardment of Gaza.
5. Continue and increase the Union's work through Education International and other alliances to co-ordinate international trade union opposition to military invasion.
6. Take every opportunity to oppose the UK Government's involvement in invasions like Iraq and Afghanistan and within the TUC to promote the Union's opposition to invasions, wars and military conflict to promote imperialist self-interests and the need for UK foreign policy to break with that of Washington.
7. Give high priority to providing solidarity and practical assistance to trade union and workers organisations in all areas of world conflict, including support through Education International on the basis of these policies.