

Green Party reaction to Rishi Sunak's cabinet reshuffle



Green Party

13 November 2023

Commenting on Rishi Sunak's extensive cabinet reshuffle today, co-leader of the Green Party, Adrian Ramsay, said:

"This reshuffle looks desperate and is a sign that Rishi Sunak has run out of talent. David Cameron started the programme of cuts to our public services which has now brought the NHS to near breaking point. Since his disastrous exit he has cashed in on dodgy lobbying for global oligarchs. And on the odd occasion where Cameron did take a principled stand – such as on maintaining the international aid budget – the government has since reneged.

"As to the departure of Therese Coffey as Environment Secretary, nature can at least temporarily breathe a sigh of relief as we await to see who replaces her. She put in place a subsidy system which is not working for farmers or the environment, and she has failed to tackle the blight of sewage in our rivers – a situation she herself described as 'a scandal' when I challenged her on it at a public meeting in Suffolk last month.

"We need a fresh start on the environment, with real action to stop the water companies profiting from failure and a proper system of nature-friendly farming payments which are easy for farmers to access.

"This chaotic and unprincipled government has reached the end of the road. It is doing great harm to the country. We need a general election now."

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An immediate bilateral ceasefire in

Israel and Gaza

As Liberal Democrats, we have always stood in support of a lasting peace and a two-state solution in Israel and Palestine. In the face of the horrific violence of the last few weeks, we are clear that a lasting peace is the only way to guarantee the dignity and security which both Palestinians and Israelis deserve.

Hamas' terrorist attacks on October 7th shocked the world. We condemned them and the taking of hostages, unequivocally. Hamas cannot, for the security of Israelis nor the future of Palestinians, be allowed to continue in charge of Gaza.

Right now we have a disaster. When I met with NGOs working on the ground in Gaza, they told me just how devastating a humanitarian catastrophe we are facing.

Thousands of innocent civilians have already been killed, including thousands of children. I met the Palestinian Ambassador just days ago – tragically he had lost family members. I passed on my condolences on behalf of the Liberal Democrats to all Palestinians.

And the humanitarian crisis just seems to get worse. Essential supplies like water, food, medicine and fuel still remain in very short supply or totally cut off from Gaza. And 200 people are still held hostage, including children. And the risk of regional escalation grows by the day, underlined by the fact that the UK withdrew diplomatic staff from Lebanon earlier this week.

More than a month since Hamas' atrocities, it is increasingly clear that a military solution to eliminate Hamas is not possible. Nor is it tenable for Israel to reoccupy Gaza.

Only a sustained political and diplomatic solution will resolve this conflict and deliver a lasting peace. We urgently need movement towards that solution now.

But how? The answer is via an immediate bilateral ceasefire.

It is important to be clear. Some who call for a ceasefire really seem to mean freezing the conflict. But that's not acceptable. It leaves Hamas in place in Gaza.

My meeting with families whose loved ones are, right now, being held hostage in Gaza made it very clear to me that such an outcome is unacceptable. And so too is it unacceptable for Palestinians. They deserve a state of their own, and security, just as Israelis do too.

Freezing the conflict doesn't look to the future and will do nothing to bring about that long term security.

That's why a ceasefire cannot be an end in itself, even though it is very

clearly needed now to stop the bloodshed and trauma for Palestinians and Israelis. It is temporary by its very definition: it is a step towards peace. And it is contingent upon both parties sticking to it. If one party breaks the ceasefire, a military option remains on the table.

I am not naive about the difficulties involved in getting to this position – it may require a cessation in hostilities, as we have already called for, to create the basis for a ceasefire, and we welcome any progress however small towards this goal, including the hours in specific areas committed to by Israel. Nor will it be easy to rid Gaza of Hamas.

Maximum pressure now needs to be applied on all parties, with tough conditions carefully monitored and verified. That will require a huge and sustained effort from the international community and the UN, with a particular role to be played by Arab neighbours.

Our job – and the job of the whole international community – is to bring an end to this conflict, and stop the killing of thousands of innocent civilians, while ensuring that we do not return to how things were before October 7th.

Movement towards a political solution, putting us back on the path to two states, is needed more than ever.

Right now, we simply cannot afford not to try.

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Author:

Vigilance urged following confirmation of single case of Bluetongue in Kent

The Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) for Northern Ireland (NI) has urged farmers to be vigilant following confirmation of a single case of Bluetongue Virus (BTV-3) in a cow in Kent.

Greens reject Home Secretary's

'dangerous' comments and call for massive turn out for ceasefire in Gaza



Green Party

10 November 2023

Green Party co-leader Carla Denyer urged a massive turnout on tomorrow's pro-ceasefire march, as "the strongest way to send a clear message that people want a ceasefire and have no time for Home Secretary Suella Braverman's toxic rhetoric."

Denyer added:

"This is a march to call for a ceasefire – an Armistice – that is urgently needed. The Green Party wants to see the unconditional release of hostages and the opening up of humanitarian aid to allow a dialogue about a long-term solution that ends the occupation and offers peace and security to Palestinians and Israelis alike.

"The Home Secretary's comments are dangerous, inciting division at a time when we need to bring people together.

"Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday are national moments of reflection and must be respected. The organisers of the pro-ceasefire march have been really clear that they have no intention of disrupting Armistice Day events. Indeed, I would say that Armistice Day is a very appropriate moment for people to be calling for a ceasefire – an armistice – so that civilians in Israel and Gaza can be protected.

"The Gaza ceasefire call has the backing of the United Nations, humanitarian aid agencies, three quarters of the British public, and growing numbers of countries, including Ireland and France. Hundreds of thousands have been out on the streets peacefully calling for an end to violence.

"The Labour leadership needs to do more than stand on the sidelines. I invite them to throw their full support behind the growing call for a ceasefire."

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Maximum taxi fares to increase

The Department for Infrastructure has announced a decision to increase maximum taxi fares.