

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP**  
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

27<sup>th</sup> April 2020

*Jean Comfrent,*

**RE: ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS & TRADE - EDM 225.**

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of international law and trade with illegal Israeli settlements, with specific reference to Early Day Motion (EDM) 225; your comments upon which I have read with great interest.

Notwithstanding the fact that as a Government Minister I am unable to sign EDMs, in any event, I have general concerns about the effectiveness and expense of the EDM system, and I think it is much more effective to raise concerns directly with Ministers, both verbally, and in writing, rather than signing EDMs.

I can tell you, however, that the UK's position on Israeli settlements is clear. Settlements are illegal under international law and damaging to renewed efforts to launch peace negotiations.

I firmly believe that the international community must redouble its efforts to support a comprehensive peace agreement that delivers a safe and secure Israel alongside an independent Palestine. A two-state solution brought about through agreement is the most effective way for Palestinian aspirations of statehood to be met.

That being said, the UK, along with a number of other European countries, opposed the creation of the UN's business and human rights database. The UK Government neither encourages, nor offers support to, individuals or companies who operate in settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

*With best wishes,*

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP**  
**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT**  
**CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**