



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

28th July 2023

Dear Constance,

RE: ISRAEL AND THE OPTs

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of your concerns about Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). I have read your comments with interest.

The UK's position, which I support, is clear and longstanding. There should be a negotiated settlement leading to a safe and secure Israel living alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian state.

To this end, I know that the UK repeatedly calls on Israel – both bilaterally and via the UN – to abide by its obligations under international law and is in close dialogue with Israel regarding various issues relating to the occupation. The UK continues to urge all parties to de-escalate.

Indeed, Israel and the OPTs remain a human rights priority for the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). Befitting this, ministers in London and officials in Tel Aviv continue to monitor all issues relating to the occupation and raise concerns with the relevant authorities, and via the appropriate multilateral fora, accordingly.

On the issue of bilateral trade, the UK does not recognise the OPTs and settlements there as part of Israel. Goods from settlements are not covered by the 'UK-Israel Trade and Partnership Agreement' and do not receive preferential tariff treatment. While it is ultimately a decision for an individual or company as to whether to operate in the settlements in the OPTs, the UK Government neither encourages nor offers support to individuals or companies who operate in settlements in the OPTs.

I note your suggestion about the imposition of targeted sanctions. I do not, however, speculate on potential future designations as to do so could undermine their impact. I know that the FCDO keeps all relevant evidence under constant review.

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