



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
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Mr Tareq Shrourou  
Director, Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights  
c/o Mansfield Chambers  
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London, WC2A 1LG

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25 September 2014

*Dear Mr Shrourou,*

Thank you for your letter of 8 July to the Foreign Secretary about Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). I have been asked to reply.

You raised concerns about Israeli operations in the West Bank following the kidnap of the three Israeli teenagers. You will no doubt be aware that a Palestinian teenager was also murdered on 2 July. We have condemned these acts, and both the Prime Minister and the former Foreign Secretary, The Rt Hon William Hague MP, have stressed the importance of those responsible being brought to justice. The Foreign Affairs Council reiterated this message in its conclusions of 21 July, condemning the abductions and murders, and calling on both sides to work together to bring the perpetrators to justice. It is deeply tragic that so many children have been killed and injured in Israel and the OPTs, including in the recent escalation in violence in Gaza, as a result of the conflict.

We have a regular dialogue with the Government of Israel about the implementation of its obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention as the occupying power. Mr Hague made clear during the search for the Israeli teenagers that any use of force must be proportionate, and these messages were echoed by Baroness Ashton on behalf of the European External Action Service on 30 June.

The Middle East Peace Process continues to be one of the UK's principle foreign policy priorities. The current events in Gaza only reinforce the need to take steps towards a lasting peace. The Israeli and Palestinian people deserve a just and durable peace that ends the conflict once and for all and the only way to achieve this is through negotiations. The UK stands ready to do all it can to support this goal.

*Yours sincerely,*

*B. Griffiths*

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