



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

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03 June 2014

Dear Mr Shrourou,

Thank you for your letter of 17 April to the Foreign Secretary about Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). I have been asked to reply.

The Government understand your concerns about B'Tselem's report on the case of Yousef al-Shawamrah. UK officials in Tel Aviv have discussed this incident and the subsequent investigation, which has not yet concluded, with the Israel Defence Forces (IDF). They will continue to have discussions with the IDF on the investigation in the future.

However, the UK has repeatedly expressed concerns, most recently by officials in Tel Aviv on 30 May, about the appropriate use of force, including the use of live ammunition, by the Israel Defence Forces, as well as the need for Israel to implement the recommendations of the Turkel Commission on improving how the Israeli authorities investigate alleged violations of international humanitarian law. We raised those concerns during Israel's Universal Periodic Review session at the UN Human Rights Council on 29 October. More details are available of our concerns and actions can be found in the annual Foreign and Commonwealth Office human rights and democracy report:

<http://fcohrdreport.readandcomment.com/human-rights-in-countries-of-concern/israel-and-the-opts/>.

The Prime Minister used his visit to Israel and the OPTs in March to provide full support for US-led peace efforts towards a two-state solution, and to encourage both parties to make the difficult decisions necessary. He also raised the importance of how the Israelis behave in the West Bank and elsewhere directly with the Israeli Prime Minister.

On 21 May, the local EU missions in Jerusalem and Ramallah issued a local statement expressing deep concern about the deaths of two Palestinian youths on 15 May in the West Bank and emphasising the importance of such incidents being investigated thoroughly. They reiterated the need for security forces, whether Israeli or Palestinian, to refrain from the use of lethal force, except in cases where there is a real and imminent threat to life.

Yours sincerely,

B.J. Griffiths

Barry Griffiths