



Foreign, Commonwealth  
& Development Office

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8 June 2022

Thank you for your letter of 10 May to the Foreign Secretary about Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). I am replying as the Minister for the Middle East.

The UK is aware of the 4 May decision by the Israeli Supreme Court on the Masafer Yatta eviction case in the OPTs. We are monitoring this issue closely given the increased risk of the forced transfer of over 1000 Palestinians and the demolition of their homes.

We are clear that in all but the most exceptional of circumstances, demolitions and forced evictions are contrary to international humanitarian law. The practice causes unnecessary suffering to Palestinians and is harmful to efforts to promote peace.

The UK's position on settlements is clear. They are illegal under international law and damaging to renewed efforts to launch peace negotiations. Our position was reflected in our support for UN Security Council Resolution 2334. On 13 May, the FCDO issued a statement making clear our concern about the government of Israel decision to advance the construction of over 4000 new settlement buildings across the OPTs. We urged Israel to reverse this decision.

The UK National Contact Point (NCP) is a unit that operates independently within the Department for International Trade. Government Ministers play no part in the UK NCP's decisions on complaints. UK NCP does not comment on the outcome of its complaints outside of the official complaint statements it publishes online. Further information on UK NCP is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-national-contact-point/about>

The UK does not recognise the OPTs, including Israeli settlements, as part of Israel. Our position is that Israeli goods originating from the State of Israel will be covered by the UK-Israel FTA and receive tariff preferences. Palestinian goods originating from the West Bank and Gaza (the OPTs) are covered by the UK-Palestinian Authority Political, Trade and Partnership Agreement and receive tariff preferences. Settlement goods originating from illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank are not covered by either agreement, and therefore do not receive tariff preferences.

The UK supports accurate labelling of settlement goods, so as not to mislead the consumer. There are currently no plans for legislation to ban the import of products from Israeli settlements.

The UK regularly raises our opposition to settlements, demolitions and evictions in the OPTs with the government of Israel. We have called on Israel to end this practice. The situation on the ground in Israel and the OPTs demonstrates the urgent need to make progress towards peace. The UK remains committed to the two-state solution as the best way to bring peace and stability to the region.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'A' followed by a long horizontal line that tapers to the right.

**Rt Hon. Amanda Milling MP**  
**Minister of State for Asia and the Middle East**