



HOUSE OF COMMONS

3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020

Dear local residents,

Thank you to those who have contacted me about the Middle East Peace Process.

I recognise your concerns about the situation in the region, which is why I share the UK Government's commitment to a two-state solution which leads to a safe and secure Israel living alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian state based on: 1967 borders with agreed land swaps; Jerusalem as the shared capital of both states; and a fair and realistic settlement for refugees.

The UK continues to urge Israel and the Palestinian Authority to engage in substantive peace talks and resume direct negotiations towards a just and durable two-state solution, and I have been assured that the UK has a regular dialogue with many parties on this important issue. As part of this dialogue, the UK Government consistently calls for an immediate end to all actions that undermine the viability of the two-state solution. This includes terrorism, anti-Semitic incitement, settlement expansion, and the demolition of Palestinian property in the West Bank.

With regards to settlement expansion specifically, the UK Government is clear that these are illegal under international law and Ministers have repeatedly urged the Israeli Government to reverse its policy of settlement expansion. At the same time, peace is made harder to achieve by Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad's ongoing decision to reject the Quartet principles and embrace unacceptable violence. The UK supports steps towards intra-Palestinian reconciliation and the uniting of the Gaza Strip and West Bank under the effective functioning of the Palestinian Authority.

In addition, the UK has consistently been among the top donors to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and has recently significantly increased its financial contribution to UNRWA in light of the organisation's funding difficulties. The UK contribution will help to deliver essential services, including healthcare and education for millions of Palestinian refugees.

Finally, with regards to the proposal by the USA for peace between Israelis and Palestinians, I welcome this proposal which clearly reflects extensive investment in time and effort. However, only the leaders of Israel and the Palestinian territories can determine whether the proposals can meet the needs and aspirations of the people they represent. I



would, therefore, encourage them to give the latest plan genuine and fair consideration, and to explore whether it might prove a first step on the road back to negotiations. That being said, the Government has said that the UK's position has not changed.

I hope that this information is helpful. If you have any further concerns about this, or any other issues, please do get back in touch.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Hunt'.

Jane Hunt MP