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The Rt. Hon Priti Patel MP
Secretary of State for International Development
Department for International Development
22 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2EG

Dear Secretary of State,

We write to ask you to support the creation of the International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace.

As Britain found in Northern Ireland, broad popular support is an essential underpinning for any successful peace process.

Over the two decades since the signing of the Oslo Accords, an extensive and growing network of NGOs has worked at a grassroots level to foster the values of coexistence, peace and reconciliation between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples which will be required if any future settlement is to be sustainable. Such people-to-people work is already evident in all kinds of fields. From sports clubs for children and young people to environmental, cultural, economic and interfaith projects, the job of building positive relationships across conflict lines has already commenced.

However, despite the huge investments made by the international community in the peace process, coexistence work has not been viewed as an essential part of this investment. Britain's spending in Israel-Palestine exemplifies the problem.

Modelled on the highly successful International Fund for Ireland, the International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace has been designed by the Alliance for Middle East Peace – a coalition of over 90 organisations building people-to-people cooperation and coexistence – to leverage and increase public and private contributions worldwide, funding joint economic development and civil society projects that promote coexistence, peace and reconciliation. Crucially, the intent behind the fund is to bring additional resources to solving this conflict by highlighting a critical need to support civil society projects and by unlocking large-scale project opportunities not possible with current resources. The fund is not intended to receive support that otherwise would be provided directly to either the Palestinian Authority or to Israel.

Without sufficient funding – either from governments or private philanthropy – coexistence projects are currently only able to have a limited impact. Operating at scale and properly funded, they could, however, help to build powerful constituencies for peace in Israel and Palestine, forcing leaders in both countries to return to meaningful negotiations.



We urge you to both support the creation of the International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace, and to show Britain's commitment to this vital cause by increasing spending on coexistence work. As an interim measure, we would like to see spending rise from its current level to £1.35m.

Yours sincerely,

Rt. Hon Joan Ryan MP
Chair, Labour Friends of Israel

Dave Anderson MP
Ian Austin MP
Luciana Berger MP
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