



10 DOWNING STREET
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THE PRIME MINISTER

14 March 2016

Dear Jean,

Thank you for your letter of 12 February about the recent violence across the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs) and Israel.

I remain deeply concerned by the recent wave of violent clashes and terrorist attacks that have resulted in a terrible loss of life of Israelis and Palestinians. We condemn all acts of violence and deplore incitement on both sides of this conflict. The Government has been urging both leaderships to avoid engaging in action and language which undermines progress towards a peaceful negotiated solution. We monitor allegations of incitement closely and regularly raise instances with both the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the Government of Israel. We have also encouraged both parties to reinstate the US-Palestinian-Israeli Tripartite Committee on Anti-Incitement, as a practical step forwards to address accusations of incitement and help to reduce future occurrences.

Britain, alongside other international donors, supports the work of the PA to build strong institutions and deliver essential services, such as health and education. The Department for International Development's (DFID) direct financial assistance to the PA is used to pay the salaries of civil servants, thereby delivering basic services, maintaining stability and reducing poverty.

This support is provided through a multi-donor trust fund, administered by the World Bank, which carries out close monitoring of PA expenditure. A thorough vetting process ensures that only approved civil servants are eligible, and that we have a clear understanding of how UK funding is spent. DFID's financial assistance to the PA is governed by a Memorandum of Understanding that reaffirms the PA's commitment to non-violence and a negotiated solution to the conflict.

As part of its Bilateral Aid Review, DFID is already undertaking a review of its programme in the OPTs to consider how it can best support progress towards a negotiated two-state solution. We are also open to considering your suggestion of increasing support through our Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) for strong co-existence projects that bring Israelis and Palestinians together, where these would deliver a positive impact, represent value for money and follow the requirements for how CSSF funds may be used.

I can assure you that the UK remains a firm friend of Israel and that this Government's commitment to Israel's security is absolute. Every Israeli and Palestinian has the right to live in peace and security and only a negotiated two-state solution will resolve the conflict and end the occupation. The UK stands ready to do all it can to support this goal.

Thank you, once again, for writing.

Yan,
David

The Right Honourable Joan Ryan MP