



Department  
for International  
Development



Rt Hon Desmond Swayne TD MP  
Minister of State

Rt Hon Joan Ryan MP  
House of Commons  
London  
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Dear Joan

Thank you for your letter of 27 April to Justine Greening requesting the suspension of financial assistance to the Palestinian Authority (PA). I am replying as Minister who leads on the issues raised.

UK aid to the PA is subject to rigorous scrutiny, with safeguards in place to ensure its being used for proper development purposes. Officials met with the Ministry of Finance in early May and the PA has reaffirmed that prisoner payments are fully administered by the Palestinian Liberation Organisation. We continue to lobby that the payments to prisoner's families are more transparent and needs-based.

The UK provides financial support to the PA because we want to help deliver peace and support progress towards a two state solution. UK funding helps build Palestinian institutions and promotes economic growth so that any future Palestinian state will be a prosperous and effective partner for peace.

As the Prime Minister set out in his earlier letter to you on this issue, DFID is already undertaking a review of its programme in the OPTs as part of its Bilateral Aid Review, to consider how it can best support progress towards a negotiated two-state solution.

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.

Yours ever

**DESMOND SWAYNE**