

National Lobby of Parliament for Palestine; 27 November 2013

Briefing for individual MPs on settlement goods

- In spite of official criticism, by European governments, of Israel's human rights record and of its treatment of Palestinians, Europe continues to purchase goods produced in settlements on a significant scale.
- Israel continues with settlement expansion while peace treaty negotiations are on-going. Since talks began the Israel Government has approved building projects in illegal settlements with a total of 4,019 new housing units.
- Settlements are built on Palestinian land, often forcing Palestinians out of their homes and off their land.
- Palestinians face growing restrictions on their daily mobility, residency rights and on their ability to secure an income. Palestinian homes are being demolished on the basis of planning laws which restrict Palestinian residency rights in Jerusalem

You will be aware that the Council of the European Union has committed itself to ensure that – in line with international law – all agreements between the State of Israel and the European Union must unequivocally and explicitly indicate their inapplicability to the territories occupied by Israel in 1967, namely the Golan Heights, the West Bank including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. Yet the European Union imports approximately fifteen times more from the illegal settlements than from the Palestinians themselves. Given that the EU is sustaining Palestine through its aid, it is inconsistent that it is also trading with the settlements. The British Government is also complicit with a breach of international law in permitting the import and sale of settlement goods in the UK.

You will also be aware that the Council of the European Union's conclusions on the Middle East Peace Process of 10 December 2013 included the following statement: "The European Union is deeply dismayed by and strongly opposes Israeli plans to expand settlements in the West Bank, including in East Jerusalem, and in particular plans to develop the E1 area. The E1 plan, if implemented, would seriously undermine the prospects of a negotiated resolution of the conflict by jeopardizing the possibility of a contiguous and viable Palestinian state and of Jerusalem as the future capital of two states".

As your constituent, I would welcome your support in calling on the UK Government and the European Union to impose trade restrictions on Israel so that goods produced in Israeli West-Bank settlements do not enter the UK and other parts of Europe.

I would also welcome your support in addressing the key issues relating to Palestine by:

- supporting a parliamentary debate on Palestine
- signing EDM 780 - ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS ON PALESTINIAN LAND
- To table a question for DfID Question time by 12.30 Thursday November 28th for answer on 11.30 Wednesday December 4th
 - What research she has undertaken into the humanitarian effects of Israeli settlements on the Palestinian population of the West Bank
 - What assessment she has made of the need for humanitarian aid to the West Bank
 - What estimate she has made of the cost of the occupation to the Palestinian economy