

I have long been concerned about the way Palestinians are treated, and the regular abuses of their human rights. After I was elected to Parliament, I visited Gaza to see for myself what the situation was. I believe that Israel's policies around settlements and treatment of Palestinian people are profoundly wrong. You can read our report, entitled 'The World's Largest Prison Camp' at <http://caabu.org/sites/default/files/resources/worlds-largest-prison-camp.pdf>

When I returned, I secured a large debate in Parliament on this issue, which you can read at <https://www.theyworkforyou.com/debates/?id=2010-11-08a.107.0#g107.2> - I raised the issue on a number of other occasions, and when there was a vote on recognising Palestine, I voted in favour of that.

In response to your specific questions:

Yes- Expansion of these illegal settlements is wrong and illegal under international law. I agree with the idea of boycotting goods produced by illegal settlements.

Yes- I have been supporting calls for the blockade to be lifted for years (see above) and was a signatory – along with the Chair of the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign – to a letter published in the Guardian calling for just that.

Yes- as an MP I specifically called on David Cameron and the then Foreign Secretary to suspend arms exported from Britain to Israel, and to ensure that Israel's 'right to defend itself' is not used to justify disproportionate and retaliatory action.

Yes- the human rights of all children should be upheld and I have serious concerns about the mistreatment of children – in any circumstances – who are being held in detention.

Yes- human rights considerations should play a central role in determining who we want to trade and do business with.

The Lib Dem party is committed to a negotiated peace settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which includes a two-state solution. We condemn disproportionate force or human rights violations by anyone. We absolutely support recognition of the independent State of Palestine.

If re-elected, I intend to continue to support efforts towards finding a long-term peaceful solution to this conflict and defending the human rights of Palestinians. The current situation is utterly unacceptable.